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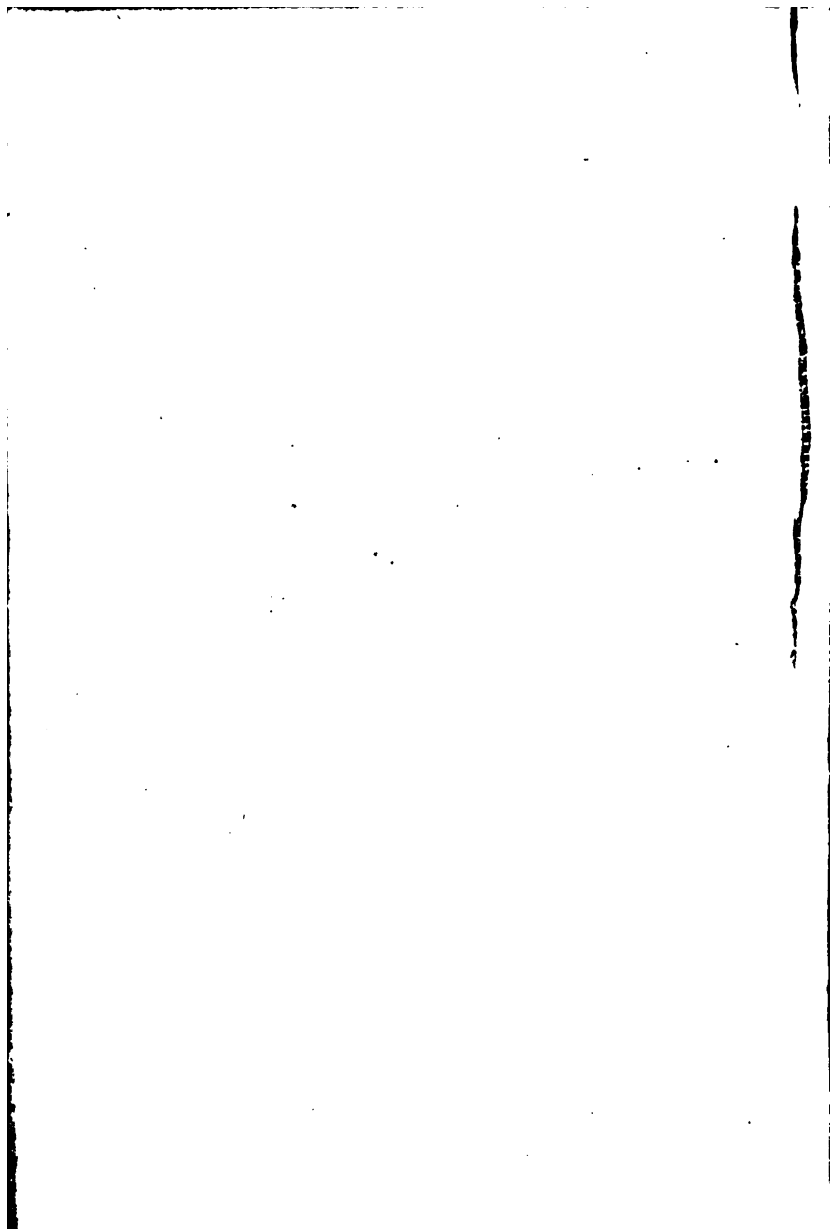
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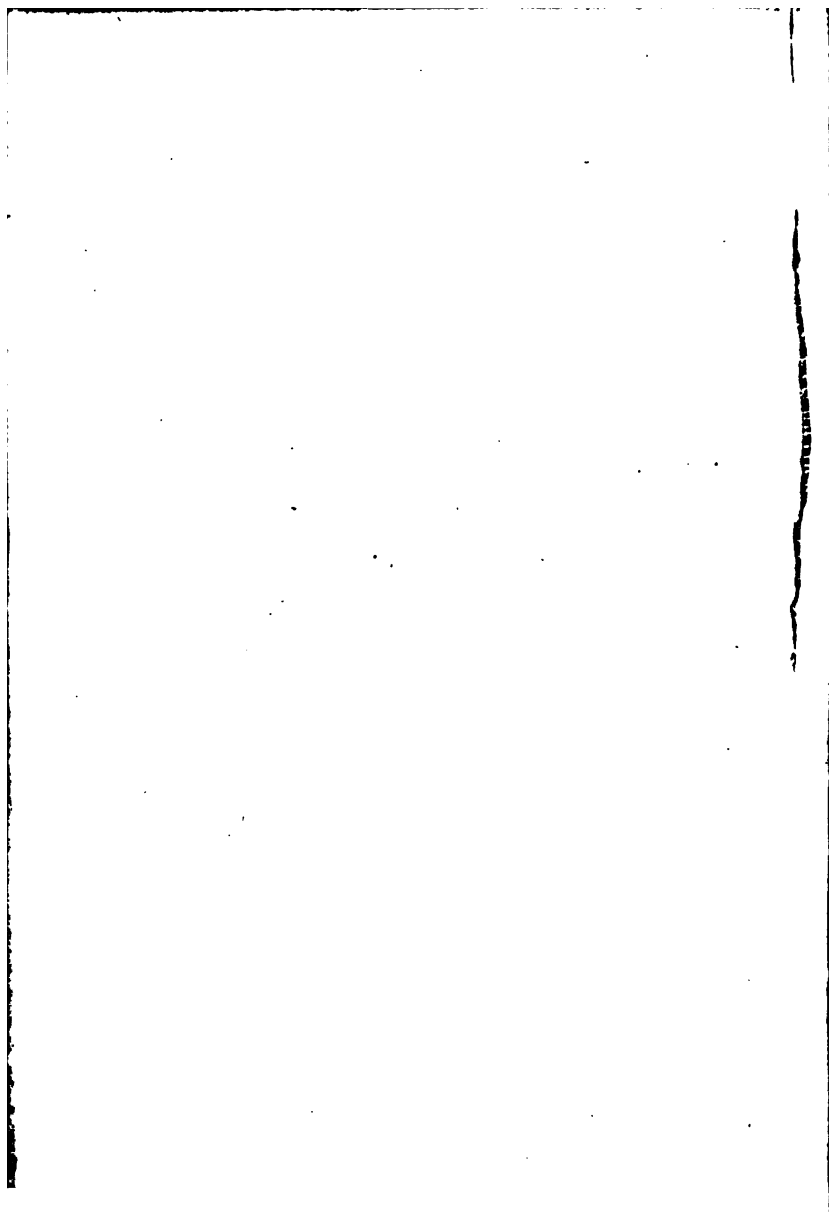
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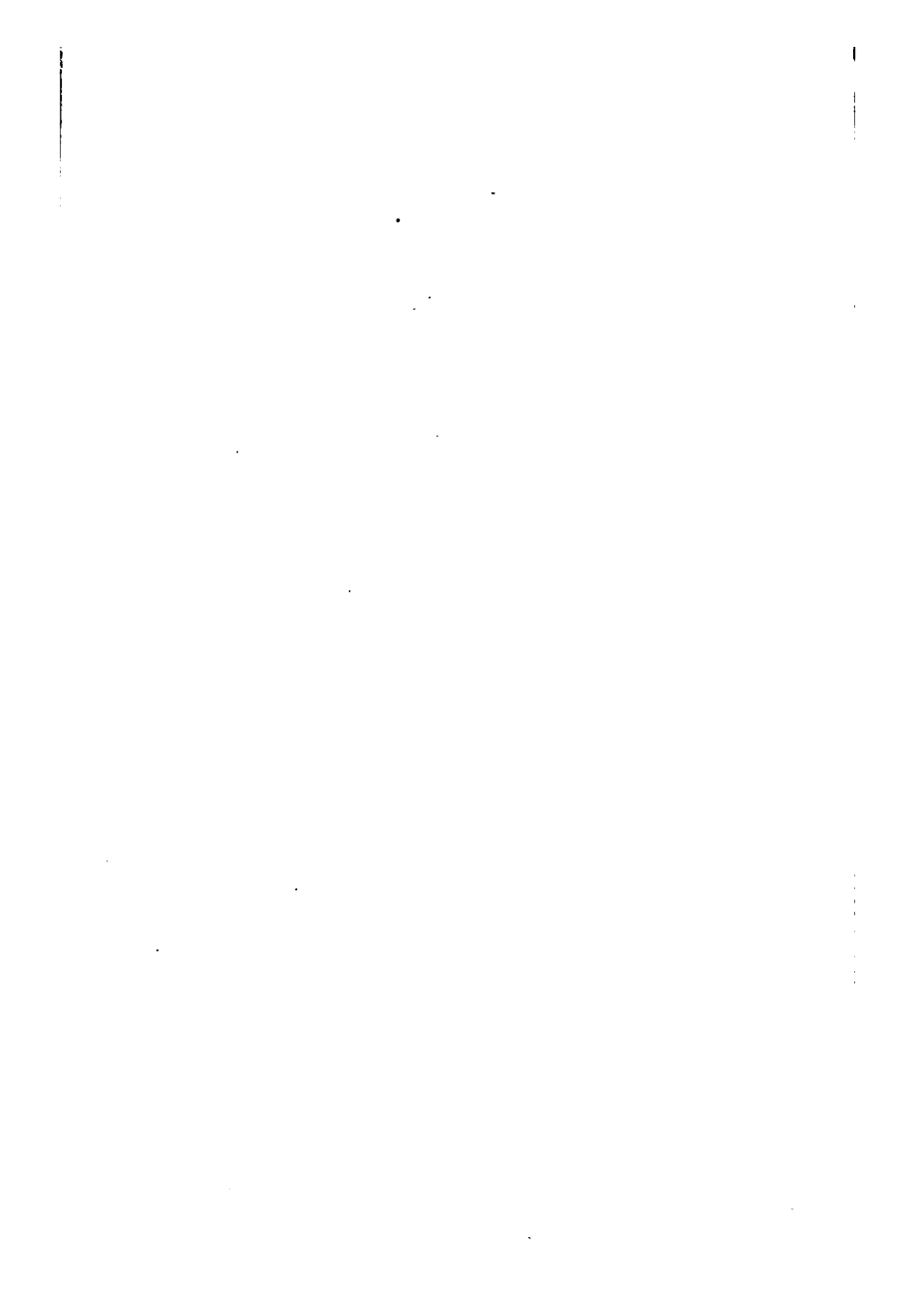
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**THE NOVELS OF**  
**BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON**

*Edited by EDMUND GOSSE*

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# THE HERITAGE OF THE KURTS

BY

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON

*Translated from the Norwegian by*

*CECIL FAIRFAX*

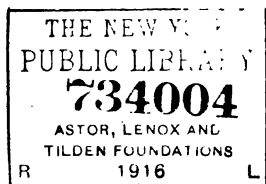
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## BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

UPON his taking up his residence in Paris, in 1882, Björnson resumed an interest in prose fiction, which he had for so many years abandoned in favour of the drama. There can be no question that he was influenced in this by the successes of Alexander Kielland and Kristian Elster, who had begun to deal with the problems of Norwegian life in the form of short novels, which attracted immense public curiosity. After writing *Dust* (1882), a very brief episode, Björnson started the composition of his earliest long novel, which he finished and published in 1884, as *Det flager i Byen og paa Havnene* ("Flags are Flying in Town and Harbour"); a title for which we have ventured to substitute, as more directly descriptive, *The Heritage of the Kurts*. It is to be observed that, with the exception of Jonas Lie's *Livsslaven* (which was not yet published when Björnson's book was begun), *The Heritage of the Kurts* was the earliest novel, treating Scandinavian society on a large scale, which any Norwegian writer had essayed to

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#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

produce. This may explain a certain cumbrousness in the unwinding of the plot, which has been noted as a fault in this very fine and elaborate romance.

The didactic character of much of the novel, especially of the later parts, was a surprise to contemporary readers, who were accustomed to much lighter fare from the novelists of the day. No less a personage than the great Danish writer, J. P. Jacobsen, joined in the outcry against "all this pedagogy and all these problems." Physiological instruction in girls' schools,—this seemed a strange and almost unseemly subject for a romance addressed to idle readers in Copenhagen and Christiania. But Björnson's serious purpose was soon perceived and justified, and the popularity of *The Heritage of the Kurts* was assured among the best appreciators of his genius. It will always, however, possess the disadvantages inherent in a tentative effort in a class of literature as yet unfamiliar to the veteran artist.

Translator, editor, and publisher of the English version alike desire to express their debt to Mr. C. F. Keary, whose knowledge of Norwegian matters is so widely recognised, for the help he has given in revising the translation throughout, and in particular for his advice in regard to the diction of the first section of the novel, which, in the original, is an extremely clever *pastiche* of early eighteenth-century Danish.

E. G.

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into the harbour. At one time this river and all the works at its mouth belonged to "The Estate," as well as the site of the town, the islands, and the coast on either side; and farther on, the lower lands and woods down to the channel of the river. Such was "The Estate" two hundred years ago.

Its principal building is a large brick house from which rises a squat clumsy tower; it has a long wing on the right hand, but curiously enough none on the left; behind are a number of old stone buildings serving as stables, cow-houses, and the like, besides servants' quarters.

The great stairway up to the house, a perfect mountain of stone slabs, for it is of immense size, is of semicircular form, having steps round the whole circuit. From it a noble avenue leads down to the town market-place, and on each side of it runs a stone park-wall which almost reaches as far as the market; on the other sides of both the walls lies the garden, which is cut in two by the avenue. Open fields lie on both sides and likewise between the gardens and the town.

Above the houses, out towards the mountain, is a wood of deciduous trees; although the fir-trees have again begun their silent advance against them, for at one time they had the hill to themselves.

Who laid out these pleasure-grounds, who built this enormous mansion? you say to yourself on first seeing the house and gardens of "The Estate."

It was more than two hundred years ago,

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about 1660, that a German skipper, who called himself Kurt (spelt at that time Curt), first brought his vessel into the harbour in order to have her re-rigged and painted, most probably to prevent her from being recognised. We now know that he had then long been exiled from his native country on account of some deed of violence which he had committed. He was of a princely German family which still bears an honoured name which does not require to be mentioned here—he was known only by his Christian name of Curt.

He had not been there long before he began to pay his court to the daughter and heir of Claus Mathiassön, the owner of "The Estate," paying no heed to what the neighbours thought of it.

"It was the noble maid Ingeborg Clausdotter."  
. . . From this point I follow verbatim a manuscript description pertaining to the town, and more especially to "The Estate," which was written at the beginning of the last century by an old parish clerk and choir-master of Saint Mary in that place. . . .

She would hide herself away up in the Cock Loft, down in the Cellar, in Byre or stable; she would fly you to wood or field whenever the swaggering foreigner, skipper Curt, came a Wooing, for then he was commonly in liquor.

Worshipful Master Claus Mathiassön might bring him Ale from his cellar, and set before him such things as he desired; the next moment had Curt half slain him because Master Claus could not bring his fair daughter to speak with him;

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and moreover he drove away every living person from the homestead. He swore also to cut down any man who should dare to wish to take her to wife: he would wring his neck, said he, and all his belongings, and hers as well if she should ever belong to another.

And there was Hans Fürst in the Market Place hard by the Church of St Mary. When it was said that he too was a Wooer, went Curt to him on Good Friday morning as Hans still lay abed, and beat him so sore with a stout cudgel that for long after he was but broken bones. Hans Faüst was afraid to bide in the town whenever skipper Curt came in with his Ships, which from that time happened often enough; and it fell in likewise with the Bailiff, Master Bernhard von Klüwer, who would fain have brought him to reason. Curt defied him and hauled his ships before the Bailiff's house; two ships he had then, and Cannon and his Company, and the Bailiff dared no more go out alone, and did not dare to discharge his office, but departed, nor did he return. So that full a year passed ere his office was again filled; when it was, 'twas a German who got it who was of a Mind with Curt in all things; and the old Bailiff, he obtained office in another place.

'Twas commonly spoken of Curt that he had stole his first ship in the North sea; later he had two ships, and folk held it for certain that the second was stolen also, but his people were silent concerning it, and naught was done in the Matter. Now it was in the following way that he got the



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maid. There came a Clerk from his Excellence the Stadtholder Ulrich, Frederick Gldenlve, with Commands from the High and Mighty Prince, King Frederick 3rd, now of blessed memory, to the worshipful Claus Mathiassn of “The Estate,” and to the good men and true of the town, Counsellors, and Burgesses, that they must so deal for skipper Curt who was of a noble German Family, that he should have the high-born Maid Ingeborg Clausdotter to wife, promising them his royal favour and especial grace, which skipper Curt without hesitation agreed to ; so the King’s Will was done. The Clerk was come in Sren Rasmussen’s sloop from Oslo ; he also was a German, and spoke Danish but ill ; he demanded much service, and that he got, for he was lodged at the Council House, and was bidden, when the wedding should be over, to condescend to put up with the same at the houses of sundry of the burgesses.

The wedding was celebrated with grandeur, but many a tear shed Mistress Ingeborg as did Claus Mathiassn, who knew that now his days of happiness were past.

But it so chanced that at the wedding, Master Curt, being in liquor, fell upon the clerk with thrust and blow and Drove him from the board, for he swore he was not fit to sit at meat with the quality and their women folk, for he was no clerk of the Stadtholder, but a cursed vagaboud Barber who had been a wood cutter to his brother-in-law in Pommerania. So the barber fled over to the point and thence to the North Holm, from there

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he hailed a passing ship and was taken on board of her.

Therewith ended the wedding feast, but this mattered little to Curt, for he had won his bride.

Now this is how it fell out ; skipper Curt had been to Oslo and there had met a Holsteiner, Georg von Bregentvedt ; the same was a captain and gave the Stadtholder aid in warlike enterprise, but Georg von Bregentvedt and Curt had been known to each other in Germany, and this Georg was a rare knave, full of merry conceits, and he helped Curt with this trick, but they got the barber to bring it to pass.

Old Claus Mathiassön went straightway to Copenhagen to make complaint before the king, and three times had he *audience*, and each time was the king Mightily enraged, but may well have forgotten it again by reason of other matters, for Curt had countrymen at Court. In the meantime was the money spent with which Claus Mathiassön had provided himself, and Curt had seized "The Estate," and refused to send him more, likewise he threatened all those who would have been true to him ; and as Claus Mathiassön at the same time got a letter from his daughter, sent secretly by the skipper of a sloop, saying that she was now with child, but that Curt went after other women on "The Estate," and in the town ; so thought Claus Mathiassön that no good could come from his going home. And no man asked for him from that time. Claus Mathiassön was of Danish blood, and a good man was he.

Now "The Estate" at this time was a vast

## “ THE ESTATE ”

place of much grandeur, and with great belongings ; to wit, the ownership of leagues of land up both sides of the River, for the forests and all the farms then belonged to “ The Estate.” And large tile works had Curt established on the river Bank, and brought many Hollanders there ; also later he had ship-building, which thing brought great gain to the Town ; he made also a marvellous clever saw pit, the like of which had never been seen before, also he voyaged to see the king, the most mighty Prince, and very good Lord, King Christian 5th, now of blessed memory, for by the help of his powerful and noble countrymen, he had hope to come by royal Grace and Favour, and he had at divers times *audience*, and pleased the King with his great strength and by his Comely person. Then, said he to the King, in all humility, that it was a bygone Custom that when the King of His grace came to those parts he should take lodging on “ The Estate.” Two kings had lain there, and King Christian 4th of Blessed memory, even twice ; and now in all humility he prayed for the same Favour. And the kind did not deny it him. But Curt’s purpose therein was to again receive all those privileges which he had forfeited in his Fatherland.

And he returned home, and found with his courtly fashions that the old House on “ The Estate,” albeit that it was a fine house in every way, large and costly, must be pulled down, and a Castle built to honour the king when he should come withal ; so forthwith he fell to work. But then he took a liking to Hans Fürst’s house for a

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dwelling Place, the one, namely, hard by St Mary's in the Market Place, while the new castle was building; so he drove the aforesaid Hans from it till such time as the Castle should be Roofed.

It was brought about in this manner: Curt forbade the sailors, craftsmen, and fishers to buy so much as a measure of Ale, a dram of Spirits, or an Ell of cloth. For the lewd mariners and their kinsfolk are not like landsfolk, they worship those who rule over them, for they and their forebears have let themselves be treated like dogs on sea and land; they are ill at ease if they are not ordered hither and thither, sworn at and beaten, and they join in their skipper's dissolute life. But as well Curt allowed them free land on the mountain on all sides, as many as there was room for, and besides gave them wood at small cost for their buildings, so that now there is almost a town on the mountain which can be seen from afar, as is known to every ship which comes in. Atop of all, the Pilots have built themselves a Look Out.

It can be safely said that without the support of these men Curt and his descendants could never have ruled and roystered as they have done to this day; nay, the more masterful their ways, the more they rose in the eyes of these Men, for that is the manner of them.

For his lawless ways then Curt in all his life never made any reparation. People still repeat the words he was wont to use when any man asked such of him. "Thou shalt get thy pay from——, thou cursed Peasant," he would say in his German

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fashion, for he never spoke our tongue right, and “ Peasant ” he would call any man he was wroth with ; for in his Country the peasant is held in contempt, nay, almost as a brute beast ; he may own neither house nor land, but must work for his lord, both he and his. Death alone can release him. ‘ Nay, ’tis even so likewise in Denmark.

But as respecting the aforesaid Hans Fürst, as he had naught else but his trade he must needs go over to the other side of the Market Place to Siegfried Brandenburg’s old House on the left ; for he had two, and there he abode till Curt returned to his Castle.

Curt did not build it all as it now stands ; neither the long wing on the right, nor the great outbuildings ; neither did he build the garden wall which is on both sides, for that was done by his son. But the great House with the steps and the Tower, that was built by him ; and the road between the two walls, that was done by Master Curt, for before there was only a path and that did not go the same way, but outside the garden to the right, as may be seen to this day ; also the trees on both sides of the road were planted by Curt himself, every one of them, for he had a lucky hand in that way which he well knew, for the larger part of the garden which is now on both sides was planted by him ; and he brought hither many new and costly Trees, Plants, and flowers from Holland which greatly joyed his half crazy wife whenever she was allowed a little liberty, for she loved flowers well.

The inside of the Castle for the most part is

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not as Curt left it, for what he did was undone of his Son Master Adler, for thus he was called after the great Sea Hero, Cort Adler. For that was a jest of Curt to call his son Adler, since he had called himself Curt, for thus the Admiral's name was turned end for end.

The Royal Bed and other furniture in the king's Chamber which are now to be seen are not Curt's either. Those which he had bought now stand in another Chamber out of the passage to the left. In that bed slept Master Adler himself. That remains, and the furniture. But for the king's Chamber Master Adler brought all new from Holland what time he himself went there from Copenhagen with his ships. It was at that time also that he bought the hangings which are now in the King's Chamber by the side of his sleeping-room, and also he bought the great *Carosse*, whereof more anon. But, on the other hand, the pictures in gilded frames all belong to Curt's time. Those in the Knights' Hall are copied from pictures in his father's Castle, and represent his ancestors.

I had almost forgot to relate about the tower which never was finished and the reason thereof. The Man who first directed the Building was a master builder from Lübeck. But he wearied there, not getting his pay, and so went home. Master Curt went after him in a swift sailing ship belonging to a Dane, which just then lay in harbour, but he did not come nigh him. The second builder was from Holstein, or the parts adjacent thereto. Curt had at that time with him

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a wench of rare beauty. She was the wife of a Flemish skipper whom Curt had enticed to come to him, and as he would not give her up, the skipper was fain to depart. Now the master builder fell in love with her, and she with him, and Master Curt sorely maltreated them, and had them stript and driven down the Market Place. They got away at last in a boat ; the builder was brought to a sorry pass ; I know not what further became of them.

After that Curt gave up the Tower, which indeed was very hard to build ; and as it was bruited about that the king was like to come that summer, he had a wide roof set over it and covered it with tiles as is commonly done, and so it stands, for no one has touched it since then. Now Curt had put himself to great cost for the honour of seeing the king under his Roof. At this time “ The Estate ” was still all one, and the high banks on each side of the river and all round the valley as far as might be seen were covered with fir-woods, and the same on the Islands. That is all different since the merchants took the fir-woods in pledge, but this giving in pledge had begun in Curt's time.

And now I must relate to you the Rest of Curt's life, firstly that his wife had been for a long time half silly. She was a fair woman to look on, but she could never abide him, so she remained shut up. The marks are still to be seen in the chamber along to the left, which her feet have left by the door, where she vainly sought to get out, and likewise can be seen the marks of the

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iron bars before the window, which Curt put there after the time when she sprang out into the garden, sorely wounding herself thereby. At the time when the Castle stood open, after Curt was dead, and his sons were abroad, we could see what she had written all round the walls. This writing had never been known of by Curt, or by those who minded the estate while his sons were still young, or during their absence, but the sons had it washed off. 'Twas thus I saw it when first I came as a student to the Town. For the most part it was verses from the Psalter, but complaints as well, and other quaint conceits which touched me by their simplicity. Thus of a cloud-berry which had been frozen. That is the tenderest sight in Nature, she wrote, and verily since then how often I have thought of it, for especially by the Road side in frost and thaw how true it is.

But now I must tell of what once happened while she was well and sat at meat with Sieur van Geelmuyden, the especial friend of Master Curt, and a merry man. Suddenly her madness came upon her again as she sat at board, and flinging her knife at Curt, she cried that that very day had she been told that Curt had a hundred Children about in the town. Then remarked Van Geelmuyden pithily, "Noble Ingeborg Curt, no one should believe more than half of what malicious folk say." Now Curt and all his guests laughed beyond measure at this, and, for the sake of the saying, Master Curt gave Van Geelmuyden, to whom, moreover, he ever after set great *fiduce*,



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the house at Bommen ; the same may still be seen there, it is that one where the second Story stands well-nigh two ells out beyond the first, and which is hard by that which was gotten by the Bailiff.

The House still bears witness to the *piquante* saying called a *bon-mot*, which word the people have turned into Bommen, which name the whole street bears at this day.

Never was there dung moved up at “The Estate” in the Spring time, nor the Midden emptied, but that the bodies of children were found therein, for Master Curt led a lusty life, both with his maid-servants and others whom he caused to come up there. When the now departed Bishop of Christiansand, the worshipful Magister Jersin, was to make a visitation in the Town, some short space before Curt’s death, and Curt heard thereof, he begged that he might have the honour of housing and feasting him while he abode here, which thing the Bishop in no wise refused. So Curt went forth to meet him with one of his ships which chanced to be in port, and took with him the Parson, the town Council, and the king’s trusty servants, and a goodly company of burgesses, and prepared a noble feast on board of the ship for the Bishop, whom they fetched from the house of a Parson of those parts, and he also, and the others remained of the company. And they all came on shore in such condition as was a sight to behold ; Curt took the Bishop for his share, and when they were come to the steps up to the house and were about to mount them, the Bishop turned round and said, so that all

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might hear, that those were the finest steps he had ever seen in the whole Country Side. Then answered Curt, "These Steps, your Grace, are singular in another manner, for more maids have gone up them than have ever gone down." He said this in his German tongue, but that was the meaning of it. I had it from one who was a lad at the time and was standing there on the steps with the Welcome Cup for Master Curt, of which the Bishop drank and handed it to him, but he who stood on the steps was in after days Counsellor Niels Ingebrechtsön, who at that time was clerk to Curt. It was he who related this.

And now I must to Curt's death, for it was in this manner that it fell out. There came a peasant with wife and daughter to the town, and although there was great gathering of peasants at that time, no man had seen any of such fine presence as these, and this thing was spoken of at a banquet which was held at the Castle, and specially was praise given to the daughter, and so it fell next day that the peasant with wife and daughter were commanded by Curt to come up to the Castle. There they were treated like the grandest folk and were shown all the rooms in the House, but the end of all this was that several of Curt's people came in to them and the maid was separated from her father and carried away by force; full of wrath was she and implored her father to ask for a large recompense. He did so, but Curt would have nothing to do with it. So then came the father with his complaint to the King's Bailiff, who counselled him to take things

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as he found them, for no man had ever yet got recompense of Curt, for all those in authority were on his side, both of church, and army, and worthies, and Patrons at Court, unto all which might be added that Curt could safely depend on the people of the lower sort here in the Town. But the peasant went up by himself to Curt, and in the court-yard behind the stable between it and the Byre he found him and there again he asked for compensation. “Get thy compensation from——, thou cursed Peasant,” answered Curt, for that was ever what he answered. Then the peasant seized Master Curt and held him where desired. But he took his compensation with a thrust of his knife. There was no one there in the Court Yard but a few women, and an old groom who stood by and saw it. Curt was flung down upon the dung heap and there his life passed from him, where the bodies of his children had lain before him.

Hardly could folk credit the news of it, but came up to see. Never before had Curt given back before any man, and now he had been slain like a helpless child. At last it was noised about that the Evil One had been there, and had taken Curt's punishment on himself, and, what indeed somewhat confirmed this was, that from that day the peasant could never be found, and not even his name was known, and he himself seemed unknown to the other peasants who were in the town, but these clowns know how to be silent, so that there is nothing certain in the matter.

But whoever it was, this thing is certain, that

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it was from the hand of Almighty God, for without his Will there falls not a sparrow to the ground. His ways have been brought to pass by other hands, in order that this great sinner should end his days upon a dung heap.

May God's name be praised eternally. Amen.

## CHAPTER II

### WHAT FURTHER CAME TO PASS

CURT's sons were at this time at Copenhagen, under the charge of Magister Owe Gude, with him they also travelled at a later time and made an especial long sojourn with Curt's noble kinsmen. Adler came home at length to take possession of his lands, but Max remained abroad and studied for the priesthood, for he had a marvellous gift of speech.

Master Adler was but rarely seen in the Town, and he never went there in any other fashion than borne in a *porte chaise* by servants in fine liveries. And it was the same at the Castle, there one serving man stood in the way of the other, and all were dressed as though for a feast in some prince's Hall. Master Adler lived alone and held no intercourse with the worthy burgesses in the Town, as had never been the way before his time. Now by degrees Master Adler waxed mighty fat and had many peevish ways and tricks ; thus he spoke with no man, but listened to everything.

When he had been here a few years and all his affairs were well ordered by the hand of Torbiörn

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Christoffersen, Master Adler journeyed to Copenhagen, for now was Christian V. of blessed memory no more ; but our good Lord and Prince, the most mighty and gracious King Frederick IV. (whom may God sustain and adorn with all virtues) had now become our King. And Master Adler went on his knees before him, with great difficulty, and prayed the King to fulfil the gracious pledge given by his Father, of blessed Memory, to the Elder Curt now departed, and that he would condescend to come to the Town, and be under his humble roof, such time as he first came to Norway, where all men hoped for his coming. Now the King wot well the design hid under this request, namely, that Master Adler should obtain those titles of nobility which his father had lost in his youth. This the King was graciously pleased to listen to.

Thereupon Master Adler went to Holland, for he deemed not one of the preparations good enough for him, which his father had made. From there he came back with the great *Carosse*, which was then seen here for the first time. The War Commissary, Master Synnestwedt, thought it not fitting for Master Adler to drive in a *Carosse*, for he was no Person of high rank, and complaint was made of the matter. Now in this fashion did it first become known from Copenhagen that Curt had been of noble birth ; from that time forward he was never seen without Out-riders and Attendants, besides the coachman, and two Servants behind. Wherefore he must have also five horses on account of the Hills. But the townsfolk held

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it an honour to them that their lord had such great privileges.

But while he was at Copenhagen it had come to Master Adler's knowledge that in the Palace where the King then abode, neither the king's servants nor attendants lay under the same roof with Him, as might have been expected, but only the king and his Family. On the contrary, the King's attendants, and the serving men and women lived in a wing by themselves, and it was for this reason that Master Adler had the long right wing added to the New house, as may still be seen, and this should be used by the King's attendants and servants as well as by Master Adler himself, and by his servants, when the King should come. But Torbiörn Christoffersen, his trusty steward, refused downright to add a wing on the left hand, and threatened to go, and for this reason it is that the right wing stands alone; neither did Master Adler attempt to finish the Tower, for already many mortgages had been given on "The Estate," by reason of all his display, and Torbiörn Christoffersen could in no wise bring both ends to meet; so some of the heaviest mortgages had to go at a great loss, and, in the same way, the portion of ground, let to certain men in the town, were sold to any who could free themselves. It was in this manner that the parcelling of "The Estate" began.

Master Adler's younger brother, Parson Max, was a knowing man in all matters of business, and he supported Torbiörn Christoffersen. And now that I take on me to draw a picture of Parson

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Max, God forbid that I should bear malice against a dead man who has done me harm in many ways, for it was in this self-same year that I became the unworthy Parish Clerk and Choir Master of the Church of St. Mary in this Town. I will not fill this costly paper by telling of the strife which was between us, concerning the vessel which was bought at the Public sale, after Master Curt's death, and which came to me by inheritance ; or again with the dispute which arose when I was to read the sermon from Dr. Martin's Book, in Parson Max's stead, he being that day unfit through liquor. Up comes Master Max into the Pulpit and flings me down. All this I will keep concealed now that he is under ground ; so it is not for that that I have noted down the Truth about him ; but in order that those who come after may see how wonderful have been the ways of the Lord in dealing with this Family, and also that it shall remain plain to be seen how this Town, more than others, must be under God's Protection, who has so singularly cared for it, even to the overthrowing of its Tormentors.

From the moment that Parson Max came, he played the Master and bully, first towards his brother and "The Estate," and then over the whole place. He was worse than his father Curt, inasmuch as he was learned, and could with great prudence, and skill, twist and turn both people, and things. He was also a mighty lunged man in the Pulpit. The time when the terrible mishap befell, namely, that St. Mary's church was burnt down, being struck by lightning from



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Heaven, an admonition to us all, as is related in another place in my *Manu Scriptum*—that time I say, Parson Max preached every Sunday through the summer, from a hillock, and from thence was heard all over the Town; many people lying off in their boats in the harbour heard him, likewise from the windows away on the Point, but not the words; nay, a skipper told me himself how, as his ship was being towed up the North Channel, they could all hear a screaming like that of a Woman in Labour, nor could they tell what it might be. For at a great distance a man's voice sounds like that of a woman. So truly this may be said in praise of Parson Max, that he wrought a very moving Fear on all who went to Church in his day, and he would in no wise allow that any should stay away, for he asked for them from the Pulpit, or sought them at their homes. Wherefore the Church has never been so well frequented as then. The lower people held wonderfully to him as before to his father; for he often condescended to come to their weddings and Buryings, and tasted their ale, and further gave them useful counsel in regard to all these, for he was of great understanding, and beside knew them all by name, men and women. By degrees he got the whole Town under his hand, so that nothing was done in those days, in house or out, but the Parson must have an account of it, neither might any bake or brew unless the Parson gained by it. If the poor had nothing else to give there was always Fish. No one, high or low, dare give his daughter in Marriage, or in any

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other manner alter his Position, without Master Max's counsel in the matter being heard. And if rich gifts, and other private contributions, were there to help, men could get from Parson Max, what were otherwise impossible. I know this well, for I relate what I know, and in no wise that which I do not know. If any went against his will, him he would persecute and harm by day and night, both he and his. This he did by means of those in authority, both dignitaries and those of the army, by his friends and his friends' friends, and his hand could even reach to Copenhagen.\* But at times good befell the Town by all this, for no one at that time went to law, but each man must bring his case to the Parson, who settled it for him. In the same way when the new Church of St. Mary was to be built, that one which men commonly called the Cross Church, everything abode in his hands, so that in truth he was the Master Builder thereof; whereby that noble work is an honour to the town, and an everlasting

\* As with Carl Brandenburg, on the Market Place. He had a daughter Christina, who was of a proud mind, but very fair. When Master Max's first wife died he straightway asked to have Christina in marriage, but she would not, and her father humoured her, albeit he was afraid. And at once Carl was charged of dealing in contraband wares, then for giving false weights and measures, and at last for having scoffed at God. From this last Death freed him. Then came his son home from France, and he was sent to serve as a soldier, and no man ever heard more of him. At the time those in Authority first made indictment against Carl Brandenburg, he was the richest man in the Town, but when he died his daughter had only what might allow her to dwell at the house of a peasant, and there she still abides. Many such things happened, so that none dare go against his will.

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Memorial to him. It was terrible what money it cost, and it all went to his brother, for "The Estate" furnished both stone and wood, and all the rest by way of trade. But Parson Max collected the money, and this he did in such a way as had the place been *occuperit* by an Enemy and been burnt to the ground. For myself alone, when I begin to reckon what I had to pay, I cannot understand how I got quit of it. He was a terrible man. He lay in wait for every ship; thus his first walk each morning was to Fetaljen, on the look out, and he was there again many times in the day, and each one must do his duty. Every traveller, man or woman, whom he asked must give to the Church. Once on Fetaljen at Widow Sarah Andersen's, she who gives lodging to the seafaring folk, he nearly came to great mishap, for she warned her guests when she saw him coming, so they would creep up into the cock-loft, or down into the cellar, in order to hide themselves, for none could withstand his persuasions or threats. Thus it fell about with rich Heinrich Arendt from Lübeck. He was here on account of the ship which the Pirates had taken from him, and had sold here, though with loss. Very well he knew Master Max of old, and he crept up into the cock-loft. Master Max was well used to this *trafique* and crept after him. However, as he was exceeding heavy, down breaks the stair with him, and he slipped and stuck fast. A heavy reckoning came to Sarah for this, she had to pay a vast *summa* for the new Church, in place of Heinrich Arendt, and he

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would never make good the money to her, but put her off with talk, so she never got a stiver, a thing she has often told me even with tears.

The aforesaid Sarah Andersen, widow, died on the same day, nay, even the same hour, as Master Max. I have much considered the matter, in order to find what deep meaning God may have had in it, and many have done the same. But in truth it would not be well if everything were known of us poor weak mortals.

It was in this manner that Parson Max's death came to pass. When first he came hither he could carry all that he drank, but not so at last, and when he was well in liquor he was a sore terror to the Women, who were fain to take heed for themselves with him; and so it chanced one day at the Castle that he had forced his brother into giving of a great feast, as he mostly did force him to do twice yearly, at New Year and St. John's day. Now this befell on St. John's day; but before I relate what chanced there, I must say that the passage which leads from the steps is parlous dark when the double doors are shut to, and that day they were shut, by reason of a heavy rain such as is frequent here on the coast. Master Max mistook Ane Trulsdotter, Trul Carsten's daughter of Bommen, for Nille, Raadmand Paavelsen's daughter, because they both wore the same sort of red cotton skirt. This befell in the passage in the dusk, and of those who know both, it can be easily understood. But Raadmand Paavelsen's daughter would not be

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jested with, nay, she even had courage to make a great outcry against him, and there arose much noise and commotion. The counsellor fetched the Master of the house, who spoke with great wrath to his brother, and said there was too much of this in the Castle, and that Max would never rest till he had brought them all to disgrace. Never had Master Adler been heard to say so much before, but his words were well considered and seemly; but Master Max would not allow himself to be taxed with it, for he was in his Cassock, it being just after dinner, and so he rushed at his brother, and, as Master Adler was mighty heavy, he could not keep *Ballansen*, but he first fell against the wall, and at last on to the floor, and both times he struck his head with much violence. From that time Master Adler lost his Wits and no long time after, he died.

So Master Max took "The Estate" in possession for himself, and his heirs, but from the same hour that he went there, he fell into furious madness, for he believed himself to be possessed of Spirits; they were the Spirits, he said, of his Brother, and Father, and Mother, and others to boot. No sleep could he have because of them, but went from Room to Room, round all the House, and cried out, and preached against them, with mighty power; nor would he allow the windows to be shut, for by them he hoped the Spirits might depart. But watch had to be kept lest he should fling himself out therefrom. Down in the Town, folk heard him preaching in such manner as though he were verily in strife with

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them. So it went about that the Devil would carry off Master Max, and that all the Spirits had been sent by him, nay, it was even said that Master Max had had the Devil to serve him in all his lucky undertakings, and now the Devil would have him back, for that his Time was come, but that Master Max hoped to cheat him by his power in the use of the Word, and by his Ghostly Knowledge. And so they fought together for dear life, both by day and night, for Master Max could hold on if he were not outwitted. The whole Town crowded into the Market Place, and up into the avenue, to listen. There was a terror upon all, but none spoke of it, and further no Parson could be found, albeit day after day messengers were sent all about ; but every one was abroad. So there was no one to help Master Max, by the Power of the Word, against the Devil.

Now one evening there shone a marvellous great light upon all the windows up at the Castle, and over the whole House, as though it were in flames. Now Anders from the Council House, also known as Anders Red-nose, was walking from the Town, whence he had come to deliver a summons. In the Avenue, hard by the House, he heard the poor man screaming with his hoarse voice, for so it now ever was, and Anders saw the flaming light over the whole building, and in the midst of it the Evil One, lying athwart the house, hard by Master Max's window, and saying, "Now must thou come, Max." Anders went no further, but turned back to the Town.

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As he came to the Market Place, screaming, he told us all that he had seen and heard. And he became as frantic as Master Max himself, and he also must be shut up and bound. And now it was seen of all men, who had won in the struggle, and all awaited the end, and accordingly Master Max died the day after, but quietly, and in a peaceful frame of mind, which thing was much wondered at. Nay, he made it understood by signs, that he would be taken to his Mother's Chamber, there to die, and hardly was he there, when all unexpected comes Parson Thomasius, and he prayed for Master Max, and gave to Him the Dear *Sacramente* of the Altar, there in that very room, and he sang to him, and prayed heartily, and Master Max could now pray, though not with his voice, and there he died in the same Bed as his mother before him.

Those that were there remarked, 'that at that very moment the Bells chimed from the church which he himself had built. So it is after all doubtful who won, he or the Devil.

I would I had the gift of a great writer, so that I might be able to describe in every way what this Man was; for what he was during his life, no one can know who has not been under him, as it was with me for many years. Even now I often dream of him at night, so that my wife is awakened by my great Fear and out-cries, and she wakes me assuring me that he is dead. But I am commonly bathed in sweat from head to foot. He was three times married and would have taken a wife a fourth time, an he had not

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died. I have spoken with them all three. For I had often need to go to the house on account of my business. Then they told all their troubles to me, the one after the other. For he would have everything done, and that all at once. I do not use my own words, but those of Aadel Knutsdotter his second wife. She died at Candlemas, but alittle before as she sat in the green Parlour, she called me in, for she had heard me in the kitchen. She was very weak, and her Hands trembled. I asked what ailed her? "This is what ails me," she answered, "that my husband has worn me out with bearing of children, and with toil, like the garment he wears next him, so now it is over with me. God knows who will be the next, though mayhap he knows himself." That was what she said, and, but a short while after, she died. But the next one was Birgitte Mogensdotter, the Apothecary's daughter, and the wedding was just three months to the day, after Aadel was buried. Albeit Birgitte was a big strong woman, she became so fearful when she heard that he was to have her to wife, that she filled herself with strong drink whenever she could come by any of that which her father the Apothecary dealt in. She has often told me herself wherefor she had taken to drink, and this was the reason of it. But she fought with him when she was in liquor, and in the end she poisoned herself. The Doctor, Mogens Mauritius, has since said this; she did not die of drink, as was commonly said. She was married three years, and had two sons by



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him. He had in all thirteen children, albeit he was not an old man when he died. By a blow he had made the eldest son, Adler, deaf of both ears, so that he became an idiot.

Even if, with my slender gifts, I could describe him as he was wont to behave when he was wroth with wives, servants, children and others, yet would I not do it. For we saw at his departing that God himself, in his unsearchable favour (for verily that is great), had forgiven him. Why then should not we, poor creatures towards whom he has sinned far less, do the like. Which thing indeed The Bishop said in the rare oration he made over him. For his burying was Mighty grand and magnificent. Never have I seen the like; I might fill several pages if I were to count the noble Persons who were there, and say what in three days was eaten, and drunk, and said. In his lifetime Parson Max was more powerful than any who had ever been in this place, Except the King, no one had any word to say, as long as he was in his Prime. He was skilled also in the Arts, namely thus, that he helped the people in all difficulties, more especially with accounts, and in Building. I have told about the Church, but I have forgotten to say that he was also a great ship-builder. As a little lad he had gained skill down by the dock, and later at "Holmen" in Copenhagen, where he was wont to go, and also abroad, he carefully studied this. I have heard that from himself. The ships built here in his brother's dock, under the river banks, were all built by him, and several thereof were

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sold abroad, bringing great fame and gain to us. But now we will leave speaking of him.

From this history we can clearly see how all has been directed of God, namely, that the Father Curt brought their Mother and himself to ruin, and Master Max, both his Brother and *himself*, and to a great degree his Eldest son, so that but little of Blessing had come with what they had stolen from Claus Mathiassön, and from many others. Likewise their strength alone was a cause of stumbling to them. In the next place we must be mindful that the King's High and Sacred name was taken in vain, in order to deceive, but for punishment it was, that in the same mighty name "The Estate" was squandered.

There are more than I unworthy, who have noted this. For, as the before-named Counsellor Niels Ingebrechtsen was at Copenhagen, in order to try to gain the office of Collector of Tolls, he said the same to the King's Confessor, who was known to him. And as Niels sought *Audience* of the King, the Confessor followed him, and, in the King's Presence, he prayed Master Niels frankly to relate all which he had told to him. And when the King rightly understood how it had befallen, that "The Estate" had come into Curt's possession, and what had been the cause of its ruin, namely, that the King's most noble name had, in all innocence, stood father to both these things, the King graciously vouchsafed to lend his ear, and after much thought to say, "The Lord is more cunning than all the rogues

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put together." And these words of the King, do I in all humility make mine own, as I leave behind me this history, and repair to other Lands.

About the year 1830 the following was all that remained of "The Estate." The Mountain with the woods, in which the fir-trees were again beginning to predominate, the great ruinous house, the curious gardens, with their stone walls, on each side of the avenue, several bare fields between the gardens and the town, and a few more on either hand. Beside this some clearings round about, still belonged to "The Estate."

The then owner, a tall, dark, dirty fellow, in a green apron which reached to his feet, worked in his own garden ; this, with the addition of a few cows, was his only means of subsistence.

He was the only survivor of the whole family in that part of the country, and he was unmarried.



## II

# JOHN KURT

### CHAPTER I

#### LONELINESS

At fifteen Konrad Kurt had left his home ; he could no longer bear to witness the cruelty with which his mother was treated ; for domestic tyranny was an heirloom in the Kurt family. He crossed over to Hull, and made his home for some time with an uncle, but was eventually sent, at his expense, to live in the country. The boy's nervous system had been pronounced by a doctor to be far from strong, and if he were to be made anything of, he must live as much as possible in the open air ; it was therefore suggested that he might be brought up as a gardener. Now gardening chanced to be a perfect *gourmandise* in the Kurt family, so that the lad eventually adopted it as his profession.

When, on his father's death, he returned home to see after his own interests, and to take care of his poor mother, he found but little else to take care of, his worthy father having sold all the clearing rights of his last woods, his remaining shares in some ships, and finally the tile works, sinking the whole of the proceeds in an annuity.

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In a word, he had the houses, the gardens, and a field or two ; all the rest Kurt had, as they say, "eaten bare" all round him. His son, he considered, must follow his example. He might easily begin by selling the field nearest to the town ; with the lower garden, it presented a splendid site for building. Konrad Kurt, on the other hand, was quite of opinion that enough of "The Estate" had been sold already. He therefore instead raised a loan, drained the gardens and fields, put the houses so far into repair, that they would not actually fall to ruin, and enlarged the forcing-house, adding another to it at a later time. In short, he showed that it was possible to live on his inheritance, and manage a garden, in such a way as to make it pay, an idea which was then new in that part of the world.

At first he expended almost all he earned, but by-and-by things improved. A single room served him for sleeping, eating, and writing ; the first room on the left side of the hall, which had been occupied by the first Kurt, and by all the different possessors of "The Estate." The room within it, which had been formerly used as a bedroom, was given by Kurt to his mother, who, poor woman, was now happier than she had ever been her in life before. All household work was done in the kitchen, on the other side of the wide hall, which, running through the whole house, divided it in two. The rest of the main building remained empty. In the autumn Kurt covered the floors of the different rooms with such portions of his produce as needed drying.

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He was an impetuous man, taciturn at times, and stormy at others, but a good man at the bottom. His servants and workmen stood by him, and he stood by them. The sailors and fisher men living up on the mountain also received a great deal of kindness from him ; he gave them seeds, and taught them how to cultivate their gardens, and utilise the produce. In the course of many years, the refuse from their houses had caused so great an accumulation round them, that enough soil had been formed to enable any one to have a strip of garden who chose to give the labour to it, besides which, they could carry away as much mould as they wished for from "The Estate" to mix with it. Never had the folk on the hill imagined that they would come to carrying earth from down below, that they would ever get time for, or find any fun in, such an occupation. Every Sunday throughout the spring and summer, Kurt went up to the mountain and helped them, a custom which he kept up through his whole life, but these were almost the only occasions on which he was ever seen beyond his gardens, house, and cellars.

He was up and out every morning in spring and summer by four o'clock, and as soon as it was light during the autumn and winter months. His summer costume consisted of a pair of fustian trousers, a whitey-grey linen coat, a green apron reaching down to his feet, and a cap with a wide peak. The same trousers and long apron were worn during the winter, with the addition of a tightly buttoned seaman's pea-jacket, and a fur

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cap with a wide brim always turned down in such a way that the loose flaps were constantly brushing against his face. He had never been seen dressed in any other way, excepting on Sundays, when he shaved, wore a starched shirt, and laid aside his apron. He had not inherited the broad defiant forehead of the Kurts. His was a fairly high one, and noticeable for its excessive whiteness; all the more so, perhaps, from the rest of his face being very weather-beaten. He had the eager, wild eyes of his ancestors; his face was somewhat longer, thin, and with rather a wide nose.

Housewives and children soon learned that it was better to go up to "The Estate" and deal with Kurt himself, stern and even passionate though he was, than to go to the shop on the market-place, for he was in reality very easy to manage, and excessively fond of children; they had to be careful, however, not to be too long in making a choice, and never to attempt to bargain.

He often seemed, when he was standing there, to be pondering some serious matter in an absent-minded way, and would then collect himself with a hasty "Ta, ta, ta, ta," ending with a long, deep "Ta-a-a!"

Everything prospered with him, his cows and garden paying him better and better. But after a few years a rumour began to spread that, since his mother's death, he spent every evening by himself getting drunk on whisky toddy. As he went regularly to bed at half-past nine, any one



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who wished to ascertain if this were the case, must go up there before that time. One or two people did so, and found that it was but too true; by half-past eight he was thoroughly drunk, crying, and unable to speak distinctly.

At last this came to the ears of "old" Pastor Green. He was always, as a young man, called "old," a frightful accident having completely bleached his hair.

Pastor Green was one of the first men in Norway who came forward to combat intemperance, and who gave up their lives to the work. It was his axiom that it is useless to preach against drunkenness otherwise than by facts and actions, and that it is quite hopeless to expect to convert the individual drunkard, without knowing what cause has driven him to drink. There always is one, and if drinking is not hereditary, or become a long-established habit, it is to the removal of the cause that you must look for its cure.

Green paid a visit to Konrad Kurt, and chatted with him, until he drew from him, that while he was living in England, he had had an intrigue with the wife of the gardener, to whom he had been apprenticed, and that she had had a child by him. She had died just at the same time as his mother.

He had been madly in love with her, he said; yes, it had been a terrible thing to deceive her husband. "But—there really was no help for it"—and he began to cry. Then their boy, "Ah! there never was such | a merry child

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born before." And, in his yearning for him, the tipsy man cried, and upbraided himself with wild oaths.

Green endeavoured to induce him to ask pardon from the gardener, and bring the boy home, but Kurt had not the courage for the effort, so that there was nothing for it but for Green to use what other means he could.

Accordingly, one summer evening, he walked up to "The Estate," accompanied by a tall, dark haired boy of twelve, and asked for Kurt, who was still at work in the garden. It was a sight to see how Kurt, as he got up out of the hot-bed where he had been digging, rubbing the earth from his hands, suddenly stopped short, and stared at Green from under the wide peak of his cap; then turned his gaze to the dark-haired boy, and back again to Green.

At last he recognised the eager, wild eyes, larger than his by-the-way, the long, rather wide nose, and the thin face, so like his own. Unconsciously he exclaimed in English: "I beg pardon—but this lad——" He could go no further, and Green was obliged to finish for him: "Yes, this was indeed his son."

That evening Kurt forgot to get out the whisky bottle, and when he did next produce it, the boy seized hold of it and flung it out of the window against a stone—a really capital shot. Glass, sugar-basin, and spoon went the same way; capitally thrown they certainly were. Pastor Green had begged the boy to watch when his father took out the bottle, and try to get it away

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from him, and it was in this fashion that the youngster carried out his instructions. His father stood for a few minutes staring at him, till at last he broke out into an irresistible peal of laughter.

## CHAPTER II

### A GENIUS

NEVER had any one felt surer that he had a genius for a son than did Konrad Kurt. Not only that the lad was a thorough botanist, and knew every secret of gardening, but there was not a piece of work on all the farmstead, from the cow-house to the kitchen, which he had not soon learned to know all about. It was easy to see that he had been brought up in some back premises, among gardeners, cooks, and dairy people, and had been well taught into the bargain.

Nothing would serve him but to go on board the ships, and boats, and learn how to manage them, for he had never lived in a seaport town before.

And then how he learned Norse, in only a week or two! First and foremost the art of swearing. His father convulsed himself with laughter over all the oaths which the lad began to make use of with the funniest accent. Then, what stories he would tell! Even before he had properly learned the language, he could interest the work-people in a way which was really

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extraordinary, and he was therefore allowed to play any tricks he liked ; it was all looked upon as fun.

When he spoke Norse easily, how he would gammon them ! It was his father's delight to steal behind one of the high hedges and listen to him. The boy would tell them what the English Court was like, where he had been as page ; it was he who, with some of his companions, used to walk before the lovely young Queen, while behind came all the bigwigs. Probably he had seen something of the sort at the theatre, or in some picture. Then the tremendous warlike achievements he had seen in India, when he was over there or a little tour with the Queen of England. The father stood hidden, and admired the vivid colours in which the boy painted it all, although he still knew so little Norse. The father enticed his son to go on telling him adventures. He drank no more whisky toddy ; the boy himself inebriated him. What a genius ! ah ! what a genius !

There was a continual chasing away of cats from the garden ; they came up from the town after the birds ; and John, as this last Master Kurt was called, having one day captured one of the most determined of the depredators, ordained that the murderer should be crucified. As not one, even of the youngest of the labourers, would help him in this, he temporarily fastened up the cat, giving her plenty to eat, while he himself went to fetch some rough boys from the harbour.

Such extraordinary sounds of glee soon after-

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wards reached his father's ear, that he hastened to see what it might portend, especially as some more dubious notes were mingled with the cries of delight. He found the executioners performing an Indian dance before the victim, a poor bleeding cat, fastened to the storehouse door. The boy's inordinate delight hindered him from seeing his father, whose first thought on this occasion was not that his son John was a genius; although, when he came to think it over, he must confess that it was a very remarkable invention, and decidedly well done into the bargain. It is no easy thing to crucify a cat.

However, another occasion came when he thought differently.

As the weather was excessively bad, his father had forbidden John to go down to the garden, and the boy took his revenge by attacking his father's finest apple-tree, a young one, which was in fruit for the first time. He set to work to saw it right through at the roots, and covered it up again with earth. His father was by no means so struck this time, nor did he say much about the invention. He entirely forgot to think of his son as a genius, to such an extent indeed that he talked to him in his room, with a new well-twisted birch rod in his hand. The boy never guessed could not grasp, that his father was going to flog him, and when this utterly incredible, this impossible thing did happen, he rushed towards the door, with a look of mad terror in his face. His father was as supple and active as he, and sprang on him like a tiger, flung the boy on to the floor,

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and began beating him with an absolutely wild pleasure. John screamed, prayed, promised, begged for mercy. He got up on his knees, sprang up, and threw himself down again, his eyes seemed to start out of his head, and his cries became nothing more than a continuous, meaningless sound, his face turning almost black. The maids, servants, and workmen came rushing in from the passage, and tore open the doors. Kurt became frantic at this interruption. He rushed first to one door, then to another, shutting them in the faces of those who stood there. He had become almost as crazed as his son, who, in the meantime, had contrived to make his escape.

Only an hour later the boy was out among the gardeners, and there could not have been anywhere, a more good-natured, more submissive, brighter, livelier lad than John Kurt.

He lent a hand first to one, then to another, with flattering coaxing words. Then he began to tell them stories about the apes at Gibraltar—why, it swarms with apes! they stand there looking across to Africa.

And then he mimicked them, snarling and making himself as inquisitive, frolicsome, timid, wild, and nasty as they. Likely enough he had seen monkeys somewhere, though not precisely at Gibraltar. As his father was passing by, he heard the fun, and concealed himself as usual, stooping down, and peeping.

That evening, he and his son had a talk together, in the very same room, the old "Kurt room." There the two last of the Kurts wept in

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each other's arms ; the son promised to be always, always, always good, and the father never to beat him again—never !

It was but a short time after this, that a lad who used to run errands for Konrad Kurt, had got a new Sunday jacket. His brother, who was a mate, had bought it at an English seaport, for next to nothing, from a woman in the street, and every one concurred in the boy's belief that there had never been such a fine one seen in the town before. Alas ! as he prepared to put it on the next Sunday, he found that it had been cut to pieces. The cuts were small, but so carefully executed, that though as long as it hung up it appeared to be whole, it was in reality nothing but a useless rag. Of course all thoughts turned at once to John, who happened at that moment to be out rowing. Owing to the cruel way in which his father had punished his last fault, and the affection which they had for him, every one hesitated to speak. But the gardener's boy, Andreas Berg, as he was named, had only this one jacket, and it was the delight of his heart : he could not restrain his tears ; and old Kurt, at last observing that something was amiss, the whole truth had to come out.

It really seemed impossible that John should not have known what was sure to happen, and have realised that after his performances with the cat, and with the fruit-tree, suspicion must inevitably fall upon him. It may be that he imagined that it would never go further than between the little fellow and himself, or that he



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might rely on his father's promise never to beat him again. Be that as it may, he came calmly up from the water, bragging before he was well inside the garden gate, of all the exploits that he had performed during the day. His father called him from the open window of his room. The boy answered him with a ringing "Yes," and was up the steps in a moment.

The instant he saw the jacket lying on the table, and a well-twisted whip by the side of it, he became as white as a sheet, and seemed entirely to lose the control of his senses. He turned round and round in a circle as he stood there, and hurriedly exclaimed, in a voice hoarse from holding back his breath, "It was not I. It was not I. It was not I. It was not I." Then, seeing his father lift the whip, he instantly changed to his own voice, crying, "Yes, it was I, it was I, it was I, it was I." "Will you ask pardon?" "Yes, yes." He was on his knees in a moment, and with his hands crossed above his head, he cried, "Pardon, pardon, pardon, pardon!" "And will you beg the boy's pardon?" "Oh! yes, where is the boy? Let us go to him." He was up and by the door in a moment, casting terrified glances at his father, who followed, with the whip in his hand, though he did not go so far as to strike him.

John fell down once more on his knees before the little boy, tearing off his own jacket and waistcoat to give to him, although no one had suggested to him to do so. An English gold coin, and two Norwegian silver ones, which were

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in the waistcoat pocket, fell out, and these he gave to the lad at once, an act which so touched the father that he was obliged to turn away. But a very short time afterwards, while the workmen were at dinner, John made his appearance, and went through the performance of the Gibraltar monkeys for their benefit. Then, returning to his father, he asked him confidentially, if part of what had been taken up in the garden that day, might be given to the men to take home, and, on permission being granted, he went off with them to help to carry the things away. His father stood and watched him from the window.

John's next exploit was on the sea. He had probably found that such performances were dangerous on land, and it remained to be seen if there were more freedom on the water. One day he set off in a boat, with a little boy as his companion, having formed the plan of throwing the child overboard, in order that he might rescue him. The idea may have arisen from something he had read, or he may only have wished to see the boy's terror; at all events he obtained this gratification. The little fellow could not swim a stroke, and thought that if he could make his companion understand this, he would give up his plan; but in vain. The boy's terror increased every moment; he screamed with all his small strength, and John might have recognised a fear so like his own. But no. The child clung to John's clothes with all his little fingers. He was shaken off again. He seized hold of the boat, and then, utterly bewildered, tried to grasp the empty air;

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but overboard he went. John sprang after him, caught the boy just as he was sinking, and held him up, but it was only with the greatest difficulty that he got him back into the boat, the child having been seized with cramp. A number of people rowed out from all quarters, believing that a murder had been committed.

John did not return home that evening, and during three days search was made for him. First by every one on "The Estate," later by the police, and by a number of the townspeople who felt for his father's distress. He was at length discovered up a *sæter*. He flung himself down at once, and screamed at the top of his voice, absolutely refusing to return home until he had received a promise that no one would beat him.

This last adventure made him known all over the town. Whether it were good for him or not, that every one came to the conclusion that he was not like the other children, not quite right, the fact remains that even at school the masters were rather too forbearing, of course not his school-fellows—they excuse nothing.

He did the most horrible things; for instance as he was approaching manhood he committed an act of such frightful indecency that it is impossible to write it, but on this occasion, his father came to the school to beg that he might be pardoned, and, as all the teachers pitied the father, who worked so honestly, it was looked over that time.

## CHAPTER III

### MAN'S BREAST IS LIKE THE OCEAN

JOHN passed an excellent matriculation, whereupon he took a fancy to become a cadet, to which his father at once gave his consent, considering that at the Military Academy he would learn order and discipline, though, as a matter of fact, if what is meant by discipline, is obedience to orders, he had no need to learn it, and he had never been disorderly in his habits. Other faults, however, he did possess, and he was twice nearly expelled from the Academy. The only thing which saved him was his behaviour to his teachers, which was always ingratiating. From the Academy he again passed a creditable examination, and became absolutely enthusiastic for his profession. He showed himself particularly good in drill. All was life, movement, and story-telling where he was, and swearing into the bargain, for by degrees he had brought swearing to a fine art. All the officers in the brigade put together, did not swear as much in the course of a year, as he did in a week. He could begin a string of oaths at one flank of the company, as they stood on parade, and keep it up

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till he arrived at the other. If he had used all the powers of imagination which he squandered on swearing, in painting, he could have stocked a museum ; or if he had been a poet or composer, his shelves would have been full. But unfortunately his oaths will not bear repeating, for they were generally used when only men were present.

For common every-day use he was content with ordinary oaths, though, even then, his way of using them was that of a master. As an indication of the first-named description—those, namely, of his own invention—I will give one example a little toned down. On one occasion, when the company was assembled for prayers, the chaplain had wearied them by preaching an excessively long discourse, which John Kurt declared he had once read in an old book of sermons. He therefore asked for a blessing on the chaplain in the following terms: " May Satan inwardly illuminate all through his inside with burning sermon books."

He had an unending supply of stories, which were served up in a seething sauce of imagery and cursing. His stories had this advantage in them, that everybody did not believe them.

John Kurt was tall, thin, bony, and as supple as a willow. He wore beard and moustache, but they did not grow well. The hair was ragged, and there were patches where none grew. This gave his face a look of being torn in two. When his wild eyes flashed out he was actually ugly. But his brow was clear, with the fair skin which was hereditary in his family ; and sometimes, when he was at his best, a gleam would pass

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over it which quite redeemed his plainness. His feelings were extremely strong, and he could make others feel with him.

The finest thing in the world for a grown man, he considered, was without doubt to be a soldier and officer. He thundered out his assurances to the whole world, that no one could be a man who had not gone through his drill. "Drill and discipline," he would exclaim, using by preference the commonest expressions, for book language was not strong enough; "drill and discipline. That was women-folks' greatest loss that they never had discipline or tact in their commonplace lives—the swine!" The whole country ought to be arranged as one vast "Drill-hall." There would be no more cranky bodies then: "No, there wouldbe—devil take me—order and sense; the whole *Storting*—devil plague them—ought to go to the parade ground and be drilled." Till that day came there would be ne'er a bit of sense in the whole crew. "The king—devil stare at me—ought to be drilled, if not the whole place would be like a pigstye, where the strongest snout shoves t'other one's out of the trough. Some one must stand over them with a whip."

How then can one possibly paint the astonishment of his comrades, his friends, and, above all, of his father, when one fine day it was announced that First Lieutenant John Kurt had applied for a discharge, which had been granted him. He came storming home again, and whenever he was asked why he had left, he replied that the whole military system was—"devil pickle him—the

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most miserable buffoonery. No honourable man ought to lend himself to it. The officers were nothing but dressed-up, well-trained monkeys, who trained strong lusty lads to be monkeys as well. The generals were big monkeys with feathers in their caps, and the king was the chief monkey of all."

What was he going to do? "Why, dig the ground like his father. The earth—that was the only solid thing there was in creation, and so it was the only thing worth a rush, or that produced anything worth having. To get out of it all that tasted best, and smelt best, that was—may the devil quarter him—the finest thing an independent lad could turn his hand to." He dressed himself in the most slovenly way, and worked among the other labourers for his living.

That was all very well during the summer, but the harvest was hardly over before he discovered that—may the devil fly off with him—gardening was simply muck. It consisted in using this sort of muck, and then so much muck, and muck in that fashion. It seemed to him at last that "all the world was naught but a great muck-heap. They were the luckiest who owned the biggest. What—devil butcher him—was war other than that each one killed t'other for his own muck-heap? Poets and poetry were the flies in spring when the muck began to work."

He went off in a ship, bound for the South Sea, and was absent for several years, nor, when one beautiful spring day he returned home, could any one gain a clue as to where he had been. If he

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were to be believed, he had traversed the whole globe, for from that time no country or nation could be mentioned, nor anything remarkable in natural history, no ocean, no well-known building, which he had not seen, nor a single famous person with whom he was not on terms of the greatest intimacy, or, at the very least, well known to. It was evident that they were not all inventions. He had a great deal of information which could only have been acquired on the spot. He had undoubtedly some notable acquaintance, for his correspondence proved it. Later on in the summer an English nobleman and his friends sought him out to accompany them on a mountain hunting expedition.

Why had he come home? "To see his father before he died," he said; though, to confess the truth, his father was in the best of health, and not more pleased to welcome his son home, than he had been to see him depart.

John, however, declared all the same, that for his part, Heaven help him, he could not bear any longer to think that his father might be dying, and he not by his side.

From the time he returned he was all solicitude and affection for his father. He was now an old man, and allowed his son to do anything with him that he chose, and strange fancies he took at times. Such as, when he suddenly determined that his father should not eat anything. Or when he, all at once, hit on the plan of putting him into a warm bath, while he turned the cold douche on to him. Another idea was to lay him under a



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number of large eider-down coverlids, in order to make him sweat, although his father had not the slightest need for such treatment. He would give a side glance at his son, and a very speaking one it was ; there was neither confidence, nor fear in it, still less any good-humour, but a certain cold inquisitiveness, as though he just wished to know *what next* ; and sometimes he seemed to ask, " Is this John, or is it not John ? "

## CHAPTER IV

### SAILS IN SIGHT

IN the autumn of the same year, a girl came home, who became the subject of conversation in the whole town, and for two reasons.

Her name was Tomasine Rendalen, and she was the daughter of the head-master, Rendalen. His name was derived from the mountain district of Rendalen, from which his father had originally come.

Rendalen was a big, strong man, who quietly, if rather ponderously, performed his scholastic duties in the town, and who, since his wife's death, had taken interest in nothing but his school, and the town reading society.

The management of his house he entirely left in the hands of old Mariane and his children. Tomasine, who was his eldest child, possessed a more than ordinary talent for languages, together with all her mother's determination. When she was only sixteen she borrowed a little money, entered a school in England, and, while there, thoroughly mastered the English language. From thence she went to a school in France, where she

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taught the pupils English and acquired French; and finally to one in Germany, where she gave instruction in both English and French, and learned German. She had been away nearly five years, and had become a practised, and unusually clever teacher. She had no sooner returned home than she began to give lessons both to men and women, and thereby to pay off her debts. This aroused great admiration in the town, and procured her a very large circle of friends. Her figure excited an equally unanimous admiration, and it must be admitted that it requires something special in a girl's figure before this can happen. A beautiful face is always admired, for there can be no delusion about it. A fine figure, on the contrary, is hardly sufficient in itself to command attention. She was young, and well-made, and always dressed in the latest fashion. Like other vigorous and healthy girls, she had from her childhood longed to exercise her strength, and had taken every opportunity of doing so. In England she had set to work to practise gymnastics, and had continued them ever since. It had become a passion with her; the result was, that there was not a single girl in the town who held herself like Tomasine.

It did not in the least lessen the admiration for her figure that she had a somewhat flat nose, and that her very light hair gave her the appearance, at a distance, of being bald; as for her eyebrows, they were really not worth mentioning. Her eyes were grey, and, when without her spectacles,

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she screwed them up. Her mouth was much too large, but the teeth within it were as sound and regular as though her family had remained in Rendalen and lived upon hard bread. When any one saw her from behind for the first time, and she then suddenly turned round, it caused a certain disappointment. People even thought of calling her "The Disappointment," but the name did not take. Her figure carried her over all criticism. Being near-sighted she wore spectacles, the only girl in the town who did so. In those days the fashion of using *pince-nez* had not come in, so this gave something rather unusual to her appearance. She literally shone with strength and intelligence.

Through that winter she was the most popular partner at all the balls. Her delight in being at home again, free from all restraint, and among a number of merry young people of both sexes, her happiness in feeling that every one was kind to her and liked her, were plainly visible. She often expressed her feelings in simple and natural terms; she aroused no jealousy, though it may be that this was a little strengthened by the fact that she was well aware that she was not pretty. That winter was a great dance winter, and at every dance she was present, for dancing was the most delightful thing she knew. During that winter John Kurt became for the first time a dancing man, and it was entirely for her sake that he did so. She soon heard him say this, but she knew that he could not be gauged by the rules of ordinary life, for he was always allowed

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to say what he liked. She looked upon him as something quite fresh, and very peculiar, but she acted as every one else did, and neither ran away from him, nor fainted, because he said that he would be d——d, pickled, boiled, and roasted if, when she danced, she were not like a young, lively, whinnying Arabian mare, or like a flock of birds in the woods in spring-time; her arms and her neck were just like a dainty, warm, little Turkish pigling, one o' them with a pink skin. She moved through the dance, Heaven help him, like a great man-of-war through the water. When he danced with her—by his honour, life, and salvation—it was like being up on the mountains of a clear autumn day, with a gun in his hand, and the tykes ranging the hillside in full cry. This, shouted in trumpet tones into her ear during every dance, only added to her amusement. The others laughed and she laughed with them. She did not possess the slightest knowledge of human nature. That cannot be learnt by going from one school to another, even though they be in foreign countries.

Kurt very soon began to visit her home; he knew the hours when she would be free, and speedily learnt her times for walking, following her about everywhere. She tried as much as possible not to be alone with him; otherwise she was pleased enough that he should come. He told her and her friends amusing stories, and touching ones sometimes. Such, for instance, was the history of a deserted brood of ptarmigan, which he had once picked up, one by one, out of

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the heather, where they were running about, all downy and unfledged; he had brought them all home, he said, in his cap. This story seemed to bring with it such a fresh breath of mountain air, full of the scent of the heather, and he related it with such genuine feeling, that it brought the tears into their eyes. Such things as these seemed to inspire him; even in the midst of the wildest stories, he would often throw in some delicate, telling touch. The way in which he invariably spoke of his father attracted the girl to him. There was a mixture of drollness and tenderness in it, midway between laughter and tears. They got used to his rough descriptions, his coarse language; it could not well have been dispensed with; it gave a special colouring which charmed, while it startled them. Tomasine and her friends did not try to have it otherwise, so that at last there was no one who appeared to them to be able to relate stories except himself. Tomasine more than any one else. She felt that it was all done for her amusement.

One day, when by chance they were alone, he began to tell her about the widow of a pilot, for whom he was just then most assiduously making a collection. He saw that she liked him for doing so, and, without further preface, he declared that Fröken Tomasine Holm Rendalen was to him what a town was to a desert caravan; nay, if she laughed, it was because she did not know what it was to trudge along through endless sand, under a burning sun, exhausted, hungry, and thirsty. "It is something to see a

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town then, I can tell you." Well, *she* was the minaret tower, the plane-trees, and the springs of water, the wine which awaited them, and white tents, and dancing, the sound of the guitars, and the smell of roasting meat. Suppose they two were to make a match of it! If that could be, he would sell the whole garden, and they would wander away to all the most delightful places on the face of the earth. They would lie on their backs under the awnings, while their servants came and put food and drink into their mouths. Or why not stay here and carry "The Estate" gardens right up on to the mountains? What would not grow with such shelter, on such sunny hillsides, fanned by such warm sea breezes. There they would dig away into the hillside, like a couple of badgers, and become rich people. But he saw what a fright he had put her into; so, without any pause, he turned the conversation into a wild panegyric on his father. The fact was that the whole thing was his father's invention. He was determined to have his son married. His father was a man who would get up of a winter's night, when it suddenly turned cold, and go out to wrap bast mats and woollen rags round the frozen fruit-trees, as if they were naked children. If he wanted to cut down a bush he took the birds'-nests down first, and carried them away to some place near, or to some other bush, and stuck 'em fast there. What wonder then if his father gave a thought for him too; but, as for him, he could wait, he was quite happy as he was. And he started off with a story

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about some cows who would not eat the grass because it looked black, but he put them on large green spectacles, so that the grass looked quite nice and fresh—"then they munched it up, I can promise you."

She could gather in the meantime that John Kurt was disappointed. She herself had felt startled, she hardly knew why, and yet, on second thoughts, she did, for she had heard, that very day, some stories of the terribly licentious life he led.

It so happened, strangely enough, that a friend of her late mother came in to see her, and after a short preamble, began warmly to advocate Kurt's cause. Only an hour afterwards another one arrived, another after that, all bent on the same errand. He was certainly not like other people, that must be confessed, but that he would make a famous husband, each one was as certain as the other. As to his immoral conduct, that was bad, it must be admitted; but it was most likely not worse than other people's. Why, there were married men living in the town who were by no means all that they should be. The great difference was that he did everything openly. Each one of the three ladies spoke as strongly on the subject as the others, and Tomasine began to be somewhat of the same opinion.

John Kurt himself held aloof for a time, excepting so far as that whatever walk he took to or from the town, and they were not few, he always contrived to pass the Rendalens' house, notwithstanding that they lived quite on one side, to the



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left of the market-place, up towards the field. Every time he passed up and down, he took off his hat, if there were only a cat to be seen at the window. Beside this, he sent a bouquet there every morning. The dawn was not more certain to come than it was. Old Mariane, who received it, had always some little thing to say about Tomasine, and he, on his part, generally let fall some special remark, such as, for instance, "God bless your throats."

A very short time after her mother's especial friends had called upon Tomasine to advocate John's cause, her own followed their example. Some of them had in past days taken quite an opposite view of him. They had spoken of him almost with horror. They could not bear his mendacious stories, or put up with his coarse language; or indeed with him, himself. He was "disgusting." Now, however, they began to admit that there was something interesting in him all the same: a kind of demoniacal overwhelming power.

The fact was that he had called upon them all, choosing first the one whom he knew was most set against him. He told her that he was well aware of this fact, and that he respected her for it. It was quite true that he was a wretched, contemptible fellow. But it was just for that very reason that he had come to her, for she really was the most honest and clear-sighted conscience in the town; there was but one opinion on that point. She really *must* help him. She did not know the whole history of his life, that was the

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fact. She did not know how it was from his boyhood upward he had been misunderstood, and indeed continued to be so still. And for that very reason would always remain an oddity. But really it was hardly necessary for him to say anything. She saw right through every one.

He told another that her hands were so plump, so dainty, and round and soft, that one longed to nibble them with one's coffee.

He swayed and turned them with his stream of talk, he douched them cold, he blew them warm, he startled them, and touched them. They did not completely lose their heads. They knew perfectly well that it was not all honest truth, spontaneous nature, but even that very fact worked as an apology for him; he did not think about sheltering himself, and most people are flattering when they wish to obtain anything.

A little time afterwards the whole town from one end to the other was convulsed with laughter, for when, in the course of the spring, a little sempstress declared Kurt to be the father of her child, he acknowledged it before every one, and had it brought with great state to church to be baptised, giving it the name of Tomasine.

The amusement was renewed when he declared, on being asked how he could possibly have done such an extraordinary thing, that if he had any voice in the matter, Lord help him, every child in the town should be called either Tomas, or Tomasine. It was quite touching.

Just about that time his father died under somewhat strange circumstances. The old man

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had sent a message to Tomasine, asking her the next time she went for an evening walk, to be so kind as to come in to see him, as he was far from well. Those two had been friends of old. Many times, when she was a little girl, he had filled her pocket with cherries. She always looked so fresh and healthy, and an old gardener has an eye for such things.

When she went up there, she found him sitting in his room on the left. It was the first time she had ever been in it. The walls were hung with some stiff, and rather dark material, apparently leather, which had at one time been painted and gilded. In the corner by the window stood a large press, a splendid piece of furniture, at least two hundred years old, and most artistically carved. Quite in front of the window was a clumsy unpainted table, littered over with papers, samples of seeds, newspapers, and scraps of food. The old man sat there, in an ancient arm-chair, with a short, broad leather back. He got up, and insisted that she should take it. He was dressed in his grey linen coat, his long apron, and wore slippers down at heel. On his head he had his wide-peaked cap, and a thick neckcloth wound round his neck. He was rather hoarse, and he seemed ill as well. "The spring was so sharp this year," he said. The tall, gaunt man began to pace up and down between the table near the window, and the bed beside the wall next the wide hall, which divides the house in two. Up and down he walked along the wall, past the great stove, with the two "Oldenborgs"

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on it, both in enormous wigs, his steps keeping time to the ticking of an old eight-day clock which hung on the wall near the stove. Just then it struck seven, with a noisy chime.

The old man's bed was of freshly polished birch, contrasting with the old decrepid chairs set along the wall, with a new leg or two, or half the back put in fresh. The wall itself was hung with pictures, in which a reddish yellow arm, or a brownish red dress, showed themselves, but which otherwise were absolutely black.

Konrad Kurt's blustering talk, as he walked up and down, somewhat resembled the room, for it was a mixture of old and new, most of the former; and not without a touch of boasting about his family. About modern days he had less to say, and it was more in the humbler style of his present circumstances. He talked without his son's oaths and imagery, but with no little skill. He romanced at one moment, and sneered the next, as his son often did. *Summa summarum* was, then, that the race was worn out, the stock could no longer spread. If it were to be saved, it, and the last of the inheritance, it must needs receive a graft; a strong, new tree must be found.

Tomasine sat there for nearly two hours, and listened to him. She let her supper hour, and the time for her evening classes, go by. He would not let her leave. A maid-servant opened a door from the inner passage to ask if she should lay the table, but was sent away.

As Tomasine returned along the avenue, where

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the road was guttered by the rain, and the storm whistled through the old trees, she felt as though she had just come from a mausoleum. In it she had met one single living man, wandering round and gazing on his dead. She had not the slightest desire to join him there. She turned and looked back at the great, dirty, plastered building, with its small windows. "No," she said aloud.

Next morning, when she came into the parlour, John Kurt's bouquet had not arrived. It gave her a pang, she hardly knew why, for that was after all exactly what she wished. But was it? She was trying to make this clear to herself, when her father came in from his morning walk. He was very pale—he told her that old Kurt had died in the night. They had found him in the morning, lifeless, in his chair before the table.

John Kurt came in a few minutes later; he did not speak, but flung himself down, crying. He cried so violently that both she and her father were frightened. Then—the self-accusation that followed!

He came again every day and poured out his heart with affecting vehemence. He went nowhere else, spoke to no one but to them. Just to them and his own people. With these he worked day and night to build a temple of flowers on the great flight of steps before the house, down which the old man would be carried. This erection of flowers was wonderfully lovely; it was talked of far and near, and the evening before the funeral, numbers came up to see it,

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Tomasine and her father among them. The dead man's friend, Dean Green, was one of the first to come up the avenue, and after him, half the inhabitants of the mountain, both grown people and children, to look, to show their gratitude, and to say "Good-bye." They had been to see the clergyman first. Old Green stood on the steps, and spoke of him who had loved flowers so dearly, who had gone from our spring to the eternal one. Every one was moved, and the son was obliged to go away.

The next day John went straight from the funeral to the Rendalens'. But he did not find Tomasine at home. He was so disappointed at this, so honestly distressed, that he stood silent for a long time, and at last let fall that he had no one now—no, not one single being. He only wished with all his heart that he could be laid in his grave too. He was nothing but a trouble even to those he cared for most. He saw that now. And he turned away. This quite touched old Mariane, to whom it had all been said, and when Tomasine came in at last, she related it so feelingly that her mistress was touched as well. The fact was that Tomasine had not wished to be at home. She feared him. She had not the courage to face his emotion, which might perhaps lead him in a special direction.

She repented it now. She hastily took off her spectacles and wiped them, put them on again, and looked at herself in the glass. Was not she big and strong enough to hazard it? She stood there and weighed the question.

## SAILS IN SIGHT

The fashion of that day was to wear a bodice drawn in at the waist with a belt, and crinoline.

She pushed her belt down with both her strong hands; she had taken off her loose, white sleeves, as soon as she came in. Those belonging to her dress were wide and open, so that her wrist and the lower part of her arm, contrasted very prettily with her black dress. She delighted in their strength, as those do who are much given to gymnastic exercises. But her eyes turned involuntarily to her face, her weak point. It was incredibly ugly. That flat nose, those thick lips, and that hair which was the colour of her forehead—you could hardly see it—and those eyebrows, light, short bristles, so thin that they were quite invisible. Ah! no, it would never do to make herself of importance. John Kurt loved her so heartily, and was unhappy! . . . . absolutely alone, and so unhappy! . . . . And his father had made her sit down in his own chair!

Shortly afterwards old Mariane walked up the avenue as fast as she could. She halted once though, and took out of a newspaper a dainty, ah! such a dainty letter. She must look at it.

When it was put into John Kurt's hand, he tore it hastily open, and took out a sheet of thick English note-paper—with a dove on it—the paper was very good, and the dove well designed. He read the following words, hastily written in a practised hand:

*"I will do it."*

"TOMASINE."

## THE HERITAGE OF THE KURTS

John turned to Mariane. "Now, what a man father was," he said; "if he had not died just now, small chance if I had ever got her."

He would have married the next day. To his immense astonishment, Tomasine would not hear of it. Nor even that the marriage should be the next week. She now gave up her pupils to begin to prepare herself for her new position. She was completely ignorant of domestic matters, except so far as to be able to keep her own things in order. From a child she had only cared for her book. John Kurt was delighted when he heard of her deficiencies; *he* could do everything. Did any one doubt it? He could wash up and clean, were it parlour or kitchen, better than any housemaid or cook in Norway. He pushed old Mariane suddenly on one side, and showed them, bit by bit. He did everything as quickly, nicely, and carefully as the handiest girl—that was a fact. Besides this, he could cook all sorts of food; dishes which they did not know by name. He could roast and boil, knit, sew, and darn: he could wash clothes; starch and iron. He, and no one else, would teach Tomasine. Why should they not begin at once? And so it was settled. He himself made purchases, and invited friends to the Rendalens'. The days which followed were the most amusing the family had ever spent. The whole town was filled with rumours. Friends and friends' friends came to look on. And to listen! What noise and fun! What tales of where he learnt it all! Sometimes among the gold-diggers in Australia, in constant peril of his life. Then on a Nile boat,



### SAILS IN SIGHT

with a party of English, where the cook directed the whole expedition. Sometimes in Brazil, at an hotel among the niggers ; or in the mines in South America. Then suddenly he was at Hayti on board a large steamer ! Then deserting from her. He did not spare local colouring, or indeed any colouring ; coarseness and vituperation rained down like fire from heaven on the different places and people.

But the work went on. Tomasine was assistant cook, scullery maid, ironer, and darning. Even in the last he was her superior. He worked just as quickly as he talked, and just as eagerly. He interrupted himself with the most perfect good temper whenever she made a mistake, for she was really very clumsy. He captivated them all now, without exception. But surely this teaching and fun could go on as well or better up at "The Estate." By degrees every one agreed to this, and Tomasine gave in.

## CHAPTER V

### HOME LIFE

THEY were married one afternoon at home. Only the family was present, and after leaving the table they walked up to "The Estate," arm-in-arm. It could not be concealed that there was much feverish excitement. Indeed, it was the more apparent because they wished all to go on as if nothing were on foot.

Hardly anything had been done up at the house. Things were to be arranged by degrees. The first room on the left was still a sitting-room and dining-room. The next one a bedroom. The best furniture of every description which the house contained, some of it old and valuable, was collected there. The leather hangings on the walls had been washed, but were not much the better for it. The heavy carved ceiling, on the contrary, was much improved by being cleaned. An attempt had also been made to clean the pictures, but not altogether with success; as the frames had at the same time been regilt they presented altogether a ghastly appearance. This was almost all that had been done. A bath-room

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had been fitted up next to the bedroom, shortly after John Kurt returned home. This was now divided, so as also to form a dressing-room. The kitchen, on the other side of the hall which divided the house lengthwise, was like a huge dancing-room; a new English kitchener had been fixed there, and the newly married pair proposed to spend a great part of their time before it.

For a few days they were quite alone, nor did they go out later on. But one or two ladies at a time were invited. And soon they were all as merry up there as they had been before down at the Rendalens'. Just previous to her wedding, and for a short time afterwards, Tomasine was thoroughly in love with John Kurt; entirely wrapped up in him, absolutely happy, and in boisterous spirits.

But this exuberance was contrary to her nature, and did not suit her. She looked excited and almost vulgar. She felt this when her friends looked at her. Indeed, her glass had already told her the same thing. It made an impression on her, but she put it aside. It returned now and then, like a secret dread. She tried naturally to shout it down, and only made things worse. Her friends whispered that she had become disagreeable; she, who had pleased by her unconscious manner, was now either strangely abstracted, or boisterous.

One small thing excited observation. None of her friends were admitted further than the

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sitting-room and kitchen; all was carefully locked up. She positively kept watch to see if they watched her. Very soon, however, some one spied on them all. It became impossible for any one to be alone with Tomasine without John Kurt opening the door, and putting in his head, but no sound was heard before he made his appearance. All the locks had been examined and oiled, and the doors opened noiselessly. If they walked along the broad paths in the garden, he came out unexpectedly from behind a hedge. If they whispered when he was present, he became restless and perverse, not exactly with them, but in such a way as to leave no doubt of his meaning. He generally poured out his wrath over Tomasine's untidy habits. Her friends thought either that they were in the way, or that something was going on which they would rather be away from. They came more and more rarely.

Tomasine was the last to understand her husband's uneasiness. She fancied at first that it was only to scare them, that he came upon them in that way. His complaints of her untidiness were merited. One has to *learn* to keep everything tidy about one. Later, when there could be no mistake, she asked herself if he were jealous of her friends. In that case he ought to have been so before; they came oftener then than now. Was he afraid, then? Afraid of what? That they should talk about him? What could they say? She knew as she asked it. He was out at the moment, so that she had

## HOME LIFE

time to cool down a little. It was not her nature to come to hasty determinations, nor was it clear to her how she ought to take it, or what rights she had, or had not, in her married life. She had never spoken to any one on the subject, never read about it. The pain lessened little by little as she pondered. She took up her work again, and tried to appear as if nothing had happened. Kurt, however, observed at once that her manner was different. From that time forward he sometimes saw that she had been crying. Every time he came in he asked if any one had been there. "No." Once she heard him, a little while afterwards, ask the gardener if any one had been with "the Missis" whilst he was out.

He was shy with her and guarded, actually uneasy. But he could not continue this long, and without warning became impatient and rough; then repented his violence and begged her pardon twenty times, and this again and again.

Tomasine was not nervous, so that she was neither frightened by the former, nor did the latter make her alter her behaviour. She was friendly, but always reserved. So things drifted on towards a storm. They both knew it. The changes from cold to hot became more sudden, the squalls which preceded them heavier, the stillness and sultriness which followed them more dangerous. Yet in the midst of it all he could be so wonderfully kind, so naturally bright and considerate, that sometimes she forgot all pre-

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sentiments, and gave herself up to the hope that, under her quiet guardianship, which he quite understood, their life might at last become what she realised by an ordinary, honourable married life.

One afternoon he came in from the garden, where he had worked all day. He wished to change his clothes, for he was invited to a men's dinner in the town. He went into his bedroom, took off his coat and waistcoat, came back again and talked of taking a bath, walked up and down as though considering something. Tomasine felt that things were not safe. She was herself dressed to visit a friend in the town, and he looked closely at her. She thought it would be wiser to slip away, but when he saw that she was preparing to start, he suggested that she should wait for him, and that they might go down together. She excused herself on the plea that she was expected. "There would be time enough for gossip, she could help him a little first." She inquired how. This he would not submit to. She had no business to ask questions. Beside that, she was not obedient. She had not learnt that yet. She ought to understand that now she had a master, and that she must obey him "in all things." It was the Bible itself that said so. By way of answer, she put on her bonnet which lay ready on the table, and took up her mantle and parasol. On this he became furious, and asked her if she thought he had not observed her. She thought herself so much better than he was, and was therefore constantly

## HOME LIFE

spying on him. It was certainly true that she had not had the opportunities of leading the life he had, but that was in reality the only difference between them. At the bottom she was exactly the same as he was, precisely, so she really need not keep up this farce any longer. This came so unexpectedly to Tomasine, that she cried out "Boor," took up her things, and turned to leave the room. The door leading into the hall was behind her, he sprang to it, turned the key and, took it out. Then going to the other doors, he fastened them, keeping the keys, and as well as this, he closed all the windows.

"What are you thinking of?" she asked, turning deadly white, and taking off her spectacles. She forgot her bonnet.

"You shall learn for once what you really are," he answered, and to her consternation he called her by the worst name which can be given to a woman. And, as he spoke, he came so close to her that she could feel his breath on her face. He said things which stung her like scalding water. It was to such a wretch she had given herself. Her close proximity and the scent of her best clothes gave him an inspiration. Like lightning it flashed upon him, that the time had come to humble her. She thought too much of herself, as she stood there with her strong figure. She dared to wish to be independent. She was his—his thing. He could do whatever he liked with her. But she put herself on the defensive. He warned her first. He asked what she was

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thinking of—of coercing *him*? She! Suddenly he screamed out, “I am not afraid of your cat’s eyes.”

Now a fight began in the old Kurt house—between a Kurt and his wife, with all the strength possessed by two human beings—and on his side with the recklessness which disappointed love of rule and thwarted will can give: entirely alone, with closed windows and doors, and without a word uttered. The table was overthrown, and everything on it spilt or broken, chairs were knocked over, the new sofa pushed far out along the floor. Down they went themselves, but were up again directly. They got across to the other side of the room, knocking against the heavy clock; it swayed and fell, striking him on the shoulder and head, so that he was obliged to pause and recover himself. She had time to try a door, or at least to alter her position, but she did neither; she looked at herself, for she had hardly a whole garment upon her. Her hair hung dishevelled about her, and she felt pain in her head. The only thing she did, however, was to free herself from the remains of her crinoline, which she threw from her, and which caught in the legs of the table. She felt that she was bleeding. He had struck her on the mouth and nose, and the scratches smarted. They set to again. This time he knocked her down at once, but he gained little by it. For he was not so much stronger than she, that he could afford to expend his strength without soon losing all that he had gained. Hardly was one of her hands free



## HOME LIFE

before she was near him again. She was as agile as a cat ; he moved slowly. He was breathless, and deadly white, as if he were going to faint. She saw this as she stood before him, in her rags. She was breathing hard as well, but could still go on. He now heard her speak for the first time. It was all she could do to say between her gasps for breath : " Won't you—try—once—more ? " He went backwards towards a chair, the only one left standing, and sank down on it. He did not look at her, but sat there, panting and overcome. It was some time before one or two long breaths showed that he was beginning to recover himself. She placed herself by the stove, holding her rags about her, and asked him to open the bedroom door ; she wanted to get some clothes. He did not answer. She scoffed at his utter weakness and misery. He listened without a word ; he pointed at her, and his face expressed how hideous she was. His spite at last gave him words. She looked, he said, as she stood there in her rags and with her hair torn, like the roughest and most disgusting of drunken women. But he put no colour into what he said, nor a single oath. " Can't you swear now ? " she asked. He took this quietly ; merely got up and walked slowly to the bedroom ; took the key out of his pockets, and opened the door. As he went in he looked at her, then fastened it behind him, leaving her standing there. She heard him go into the bathroom and take a shower bath, and then dress himself. She sat down and waited. After a long time he came out again, ready for the dinner,

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locked the door behind him and withdrew the key, put his hands in his pockets, and began to whistle. He went past her, across the overthrown furniture and other litter on the floor, without attempting to pick up anything, finally striding over the clock-case to reach the outer door. "You will find plenty to amuse you here," he said. He unlocked the door and locked it again outside. She heard him take away the key.

All the people about the place thought that they had both gone out, for everything was fastened—even the sitting-room doors, which was not, as a rule, done. By nine o'clock perfect silence reigned over the homestead, both within and without. It was late in August, and there was no moon.

At ten o'clock a man walked hurriedly up the avenue. He saw no light in any part of the great building. He mounted the steps and entered the hall, where the darkness obliged him to grope his way to the room-door. He was evidently unfamiliar with the place. He knocked, but received no answer. He tried the door, it was fast. He knocked again, thundered, waited, but no one came. Again he knocked, louder than before, and called "Tomasine."

"Yes," was answered at once from within.

A moment later, close by the door, "Is that you, father?"

"Can you not open the door?"

He knew by her voice that she was crying.

"Where is the key, then?"

"John took it with him when he went out."

## HOME LIFE

A moment's silence, and then the question, "Has he locked you in, then?"

"Yes," was the answer amid her sobs.

She heard him turn away again and descend the steps, and, to her astonishment, go away without a single word.

She needed some one so much. It was unbearable. She began to feel frightened, for it must have some meaning. Why did he go? Where was he going? To meet Kurt! What would happen? The blood began to circulate again in her half-clad body, for as Kurt had left her she still remained. She hurried to the window, but could see nothing, and at the same moment she heard some one on the steps again. She ran to the door, but could not tell by the footsteps who was coming, they advanced so cautiously.

"Is it you, father?" she asked.

"Yes, it is I, with the keys," he answered.

He came in, and she fell sobbing on his breast. She began to speak, but he interrupted her.

"Yes, yes, you have nothing more to be frightened about." Then he told her plainly and shortly that John Kurt was dead. "They are now at the steps, with the body."

Partly from her father, partly at a later time from other people, she learned that John Kurt had eaten and drunk heavily at dinner, becoming more and more excited. On leaving the table he swore by life and death that he would go to a disreputable house. That would be such devilish

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good fun for Tomasine. They tried to control him, but he became perfectly beside himself, staggered forward, and fell dead.

No floral temple was built on the steps for John Kurt to be laid in.

## CHAPTER VI

### FIRST RESULTS, AND THOSE THAT FOLLOWED

IN the days that followed, several friends, both of Tomasine and of her mother, came to express their sympathy and offer help, but she refused to see any one.

During all that afternoon when she had sat locked in her room, robbed of her clothes, her youth, her self-respect, trembling for her life, she had called to mind that at that moment John Kurt was sitting at table in the best society of the town. If society had not approved John Kurt, she would never, inexperienced girl that she was, have been sitting there. Society had surrendered her to him. Yes, surrender, that was the word; and yet, if she were not mistaken, every one was fond of her and respected her. She would never see them again. If she had been free, she would have left the country. Her own fault? She saw it, saw it. She would never show her face again.

*Now* she was free! But something fresh bound her. A terrible uncertainty. Was she *enceinte*,

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or was she not? Would she perhaps bring another insane being into the world? For now that John was gone, she wished to think that he had been mad, like several of his family. Would she give birth to a child whose nature might combine any possibilities, and afterwards be bound to it for the rest of her life, because those people down in the town had surrendered her, and she had not understood herself?

In the course of a few weeks she became the shadow of her former self.

It was wonderful, almost as soon as uncertainty changed to the certainty that she was to become a mother, a feeling of solemnity came with the decision she formed; she did not understand how it was that she had not discovered so clear, so natural a thing before. The being under her bosom should determine the question; if it were a miserable little wretch everything would be at an end, she would not live to nourish such a brat; but if the child combined the qualities of her own honourable race with what was best in his, it would be a great, great boon that she was left alone with it. At all events, she must wait to see.

Tomasine was awakened, and from this time a natural grandeur began to develop itself in her. She had borne both the actual and mental struggles alone, alone she regulated her own character. It required time, for her thoughts did not move quickly. She ate, rested, and regained all her vigour. So finally everything was prepared. She first called in the head gardener, a handsome, fair man, with a determined manner

## FIRST RESULTS

and great powers of self-reliance. He was no other than Andreas Berg, whose Sunday jacket John Kurt had cut to pieces. He had remained on "The Estate" ever since. Andreas Berg, had borne everything with the hasty-tempered old Kurt, who would undoubtedly have made him his heir, if his son had not returned. In later times he had put up with all John's freaks and bursts of passion.

Tomasine asked him to sit down. She inquired if he had any other intention, than to stay with her.

"No, he wished to stay, if Fru Kurt would allow him."

She could depend on him, then?

"Yes, that she could."

The first thing she had to ask him was not to call her Fru Kurt any longer, but Fru Rendalen, and to get the others to do the same. Their eyes met. Hers shone uncertainly behind her spectacles; his in wide open astonishment. But when he saw that her glasses were gradually dimmed by the tears, which could not find a free course, and that her flat nose worked until the spectacles slipped down on to her cheek, he hastened to say, "Very good. That shall be done."

She took off her glasses, wiped her eyes first, and then afterwards, and began, after a pause, with the next question.

"Dear Berg," she said, and put on her glasses, "could you not, quite quietly, so that no one would notice, have all these portraits destroyed—

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indeed, all the pictures, for I cannot always distinguish them? Have them all burnt, or disposed of in some way, so that they do not remain here and as soon as you can manage it. Do you understand me?"

"Yes, Frue, but . . ."

"What do you mean?"

"It would be rather difficult if no one is to see."

She considered for a while.

"Even if it is noticed, it may be done all the same, Berg."

"Very good. Then of course it shall be done."

And done it was, with an infernal smell of burnt canvas and burnt leather, and a general smell of burning. A soft breeze drove it one afternoon all over the town, the smoke drifting almost to the works, out by the river-banks. She then invited her father, with all his family, to come up to her. That was done at once. She handed over all the housekeeping to old Mariane, and let her have what help she wanted. The rest of the family lived in the rooms behind her own.

Soon afterwards an advertisement appeared in the local paper:

### FRU TOMASINE RENDALEN

*Will resume her Instructions in English, French, and German.  
Information to be obtained at "The Estate."*

She changed her name with all legal formalities. Besides her classes, of which she had as many as she wished, she studied book-keeping, and soon herself began to keep the accounts of the house,



## FIRST RESULTS

garden, and dairy. At the same time she began to learn a little about the working of the business, the accounts of which she kept. She wished to qualify herself to undertake it. Perhaps she would never have to do so, but it gave her present occupation. It left no time for brooding ; that was the main thing. She was so tired every evening, that she slept the moment her head was on the pillow, and, like all thoroughly healthy people, she was wide awake directly she opened her eyes, and was into her bath the next instant.

Notwithstanding this, as time went on the more oppressive became the secret thoughts which were ever present to her mind. She had cleared away every trace of the Kurt family, she had surrounded herself with her own. Every time that a thought of the former presented itself to her mind, she met it with some thought of the latter. She knew nothing of her mother's family, but as a child she had been in Rendalen, and there seen her father's relations, and listened to their sagas. There was nothing remarkable about them. The family disposition, even and rather heavy, had every now and then, after a too long period of general respect, or when pressed to the uttermost, come out into something uncommon, but otherwise they were an orderly race, toiling on with quiet perseverance. But everything she knew about them, appearance as well as disposition, she placed in opposition to all which could come from the side of the Kurts. The Kurts were dark, the Rendalens essentially

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fair; fair in hair and complexion, fair and open in disposition. She had such practice in moving pictures in and out of her mind, that the very moment a Kurt memory intruded, it was driven away by a commanding fair Rendalen without eyebrows. The result was, that dark or light became a sort of finality with her. The outward appearance was a sign of the inward disposition; the first sight of her child, therefore, might well determine her life. Her whole anxiety centred itself upon that first moment.

The nearer the great moment came, the more her dread increased. Her ordinary occupations no longer sufficed to deaden it. She dismissed her pupils and took part in the work, both in the house and out of doors. The spring was late that year, and in her ardour she let herself take cold; she struggled against it as long as she could, but at last she was obliged to keep indoors, and take to her bed. And now her anxiety so entirely got the better of her that she fancied, before the time, that the birth-pains were upon her, and became absolutely light-headed.

She again began the struggle with John Kurt, and even when, completely exhausted, her mind became clear, her anxiety by no means subsided. The first sight of the child would be enough, and in her distress and desperation she came to believe that dark or light hair would be decisive. "If it is dark," she thought, "I am doomed—I shall be unable to bend the child. And it *will* be dark, the Kurt race is so strong. Its fierce strength has already impressed itself too deeply upon me,

## FIRST RESULTS

its fancies overshadow me. I cannot even think as I will."

She tried to gain comfort from the answering thought that old Konrad Kurt had been worthy. "There are good qualities in the Kurt family; seeds of good which perhaps will grow again in the child which will be born. Even if the good be not unmixed—I do not ask so much—but if it may be the stronger." She prayed for it—ah! how she prayed!—until she remembered that it was too late!—it had been decided long ago. She constantly saw the back of a neck brooding over her—the neck in the picture of the first Kurt. She used her old power, to call up images of her own people against it, but the fair race would not shine. The neck remained. It had no right to be there, it was no longer in the Kurt family; neither Konrad Kurt had it, nor John.

"Take away that neck," she cried to those near her. And with the sound of "Away, take it away," new fancies shaped themselves around her. John Kurt appeared, to tell her that he would never go away. She would never, by all the devils, get rid of him. His white forehead gleamed, and he swore till nothing but r-r-r-r thrilled and drummed close up beside her cheek.

To such a degree was she exhausted by this inward struggle, that it was a relief when the birth-pains began in reality, imperiously commanding all else to stand aside.

All fever had left her, and she bravely gathered her strength together, but it was less than any

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one supposed. Therefore it was a long time before she heard a feeble cry, and "A son, Frue, you have a son," and afterwards, gently and kindly, "Tomasine, you have a son."

A gentle peace had filled her. It was soon broken. She collected her thoughts at the word "son"—she had a son. The wave of peace broke against a wave of dread. "His hair?" she contrived to whisper. She could not say more. "Red, Frue." She had a dim idea that that might be either dark or light, perhaps more likely dark. It was not clear—it was—— And everything passed away from her.

For some time those near did not notice her. No one imagined that this powerful woman could be fainting, and therefore some time elapsed before she was brought round, and there was some alarm. It was only by degrees that she realised what had happened—what the whimpering was she heard somewhere—why she had a remembrance of pain. The child was now clothed, and they lifted it up to her, but still not near enough. She could not see it properly. She wished to sign to them to bring it nearer, but it was difficult; she could neither do it with her voice, nor by moving her head, and she did not think of her hand, or perhaps she could not move it. But some one was there who understood, and held the baby up to her, so that it touched her cheek, just where she had felt its father's breath. She felt something soft, something warm, something delicate, the softest thing she had ever touched. She heard a cluck, a whimper, and now

### FIRST RESULTS

she saw—the eyebrows, they were her own, her family's light sparse bristles.

It was too much joy, too much happiness. Her blood circulated more quickly, and soon the warmth came to her cheeks, the tears to her eyes. She lay there weeping quietly, while her little one was held fast to her motherly breast.

With God's help, she would try to accomplish the rest.



### III

## A LECTURE

### CHAPTER I

#### DETHRONED

FRU TOMASINE RENDALEN herself carried the child to the font, and gave him her own name.

Little Tomas's cradle stood by the side of the bed in which she slept. The room was both her reading and working room. The other remained vacant as though only for show. Through her friends in England, France, and Germany she obtained books in three languages on the bringing up of children. But she soon laid them aside; they were all either too vague, or too dogmatic. She began to widen her acquirements in other respects. She wished to be his teacher in everything. But, from the time that he was six months old her work was much interrupted, for he was a most restless child. The doctor assured her that, so far as he could see, the boy ailed nothing. He did not scream from pain. If, at the moment he opened his eyes, for example, the person he wanted was not there—that is to say, the one who could give him food—he not only screamed till she came, which was to be expected, but after

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she had come and had forced him to drink, he screamed while the milk ran out of his mouth, and continued to give blows, slaps, and spiteful cries. He could not forget. If there were anything he did not like, he screamed himself black in the face, and made himself rigid. Sometimes it seemed to Tomasine as though she had a log on her lap, and not a human being. When he was nine months old, she was obliged to give up nursing him, for he kept her in such a state of irritation and terror, that his health became affected through her. The struggle which ensued on this, was terrible. It lasted altogether for three days and nights, during which time he could only be induced to touch a drop of the strange food by artifice.

As Tomasine hung about in the outer room or in the passage, listening to the hoarse screams, for he had no voice left—not allowed to see him, or go to his help—she remembered more than once, with shame, what she had thought and determined before he was born. The boy cried inside, the mother outside, and no one could get her away. And this, his first great fight in the world, to keep possession of his mother's breast, had no happy influence upon him, for from that time he tried, more than ever, to get everything by screaming.

Tomasine was a strong, long-suffering woman, but she became thin and nervous. She hoped that things would improve as he grew bigger, and waited till he should be a year old; but still had to wait, for the stronger he grew the more per-



## DETHRONED

sistently he screamed. Some new method must be adopted. The specialists did not touch on this, or else she had not understood them. She consulted experienced people, and was advised to keep him continually amused. That answered for a while. He was quiet when he saw anything new, but he would not look at the same thing more than twice at the outside. If she forgot this, he became so furious that the very newest thing in the world would not pacify him. Some one else advised her to let the child scream as much as he liked. Eternal Powers, how he yelled! If he had been chosen as the representative of all the sorrow and trouble in the town he could not have done better. "No," thought Tomasine, "that will torture the life out of both him and me." So she turned to the exactly opposite course, and tried to guess his thoughts before he had formed them, and indulged him in everything. This helped, but if she guessed wrong, there was no use in guessing right afterwards.

At last his maternal retainer and slave, like many before her, was brought to such a state of distress and despair, that she determined to revolt. The little despot must be dethroned. The revolution broke out with six slaps on his little person. All the horrors of a civil war at once showed themselves. But six, seven, eight to twelve slaps followed. To give up one's power before one's life, is hard even for a not-two-years-old tyrant, so the battle lasted several hours until—he gave in? No, that he would not do, but he fell asleep.

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Tomasine was so worn out by months of worry, anxiety, and sleepless nights, and finally by the fight itself, that she was trembling and bathed in perspiration. She stood over him as he slept, as David is said to have stood over Saul. She grieved for his fallen greatness. She heard him sob as he lay there in his helplessness. She saw the last tear dry on his cheek, the convulsive movements of his chubby hands, and the twitching of the thin skin of his head. Who should be good to him if not she? How she longed for his waking, that she might let him see her face with its gentlest expression, and caress him, and practise all those small arts which are the delight of every mother! More than all, she longed to make him screw up his mouth for a kiss. When he did that, he was irresistible.

At last he began to move and to rub his hand over his nose. In her impatience she put her hands under him, and laid her face down to his head, to breathe the warm fragrance from it.

He screwed up his mouth for a grimace; despair rose darker and darker in his eyes, and at last he gave a shriek, a frightful and frightening shriek, while he thrust himself away from her, with hands, head, and body.

She was obliged hastily to let go of him, and call her sister. To her, the little arms were raised at once, and he pressed himself closely to her, so as to be thoroughly safe.

The forsaken mother stood and looked on. She felt as though she had been driven round the whole compass, and was now at the same

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point from which she had started some months before. Her first feeling was one of miserable helplessness, then came a strong sense of shame, and suddenly she snatched the boy away from her sister, and dressed him herself, whether he would or no.

He screamed the whole time, and when he was dressed, and would not take food from her, a perfect hail of slaps and rain of scolding ensued, nor did she leave off till he really struggled to be quiet; checking the sound so suddenly that he gasped for breath as though he were choking. By degrees the rebellion was reduced to subdued sounds strongly restrained; whenever they broke out again they were forced back. At last he showed that he was entirely subdued by screwing up his mouth for a kiss, to prove to her that it really was against his will if a cry every now and then escaped him. It was comically touching. He was finally forced to eat, and, now completely mastered, he sobbed himself to sleep.

Tomasine went out for a walk, and on her return sat once more, anxiously waiting for his awakening. He had hardly opened his eyes, and seen her, before there were threatenings of a prolonged howl, but he restrained it from fear; nay, he even held out his hands to her as she stood smiling over him. There have been many more fortunate conquerors, both before and since the time, when Fru Tomasine Rendalen deposed her son, and seated herself on his throne. Besides which, the pleasure was diminished by the knowledge that she should have done this at

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first, long, long ago; but all the same she was just as delighted with her tardy victory, as any general could have been with a more timely one, and as she lay down that night, she was as weary and as confident as the conqueror of a city.

At that time Tomas was a year and nine months old. She thoroughly understood that this struggle would not be the last, but with that knowledge came the conviction that in the uncertain voyaging through which his whims had led him, he had discovered his mother. From that time forward she would be his mainland. She soon obtained a proof of this. Whether it were in the intoxication of victory that she began to wear a cap, or whether it were a long-nourished plan for concealing the hair which had always annoyed her, and putting something visible in its place, the fact remains that the cap first appeared at this time. The boy must and would have it off. For his sake she had temporarily offered up her spectacles, against which he had also waged war. But she would not sacrifice her cap. Now many people are content to lose the realities of power, but cannot bear to be deprived of its symbols; and to be able to lord it over his mother's hair and head was a great, a strong proof of power, which he would not give up.

And so a fight ensued, but he yielded before things had reached a climax. His little hands were pushed back time after time, and always with more force, notwithstanding his screams, till suddenly he flung himself on her neck, and the little war ended charmingly.

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She was a happy mother as she looked forward to his second birthday. An English friend, with whom she exchanged letters from time to time, since she no longer visited in the town, had sent her, for this great day, Charles Dickens' "David Copperfield," at that time the most popular novel in England. The book came a day too soon. She read a great deal of it at once, and all the life-like forms gathered themselves round little Tomas for his own day, when he was to be dressed in new clothes from top to toe. She dreamt of little Em'ly and little Tomas. She woke on his birthday morning a little earlier than he. He was lying quite still. He had not disturbed her the whole night, a thing which did not happen once in two months. Proud and happy, she gave him his birthday greeting. The first hours passed in unbroken delight. At nine o'clock he was sitting on the floor of the parlour, dressed in his new clothes and surrounded by all the toys which she and her family had given him. She herself sat by the window, dressed in her best, reading "David Copperfield." She had tried having the window open, to enjoy the fresh air, but the spring day was rather cold.

After a time she was called into the kitchen. He never liked her to leave him, but he was so occupied at that moment, that she thought she might venture, though she took the precaution of going through the bedroom and across the hall into the kitchen. She left the kitchen-door open, for fear he should think her too long gone, and begin to call for her.

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In the parlour all remained quiet, suspiciously quiet. He had in fact closely observed the book that his mother was reading, for, according to the English fashion, it had a bright-coloured binding, with a picture on it.

He noticed that she put it down on the table, and felt that he too should like to read a little of it, if he could do so without interruption. He dropped his toys as soon as ever he was alone, got up, and toddled off, pushed a stool forward, when he found he could not reach up, pulled the book on to the floor, and sat himself down beside it.

Some time elapsed before he again learnt, as he had done previously, but had forgotten, that it is not easy to read a number of pages at once, but, on the contrary, one should take them one or two at a time ; that did very well. Then he tore them out of the book, they were so much easier to read in that way.

After the first one or two, he took them out several at a time, twenty in all, before his mother returned. They soon had a difference of opinion over this style of reading. She lost her temper, and took the book hastily from him, telling him sharply, that he knew quite well that he ought not to touch her books. He was frightened at first, but after a while he stretched out both his hands and said, "Me book, mama, me book."

She naturally took no notice of him, so he came up to her and repeated very coaxingly, "Me book, mama, me book." "No," she answered sharply, for unluckily the book had been shame-

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fully treated, just at the place where she was reading. He waited a little, but began again, "Me book, mama, me book." She remembered that it was his birthday, and answered him more gently, showing him what harm he had done. He listened and answered, "Me book, mama, me book."

Some sweets were lying there ; she gave him some, which he ate up, saying, as he did so, "Me book, mama, me book." She laid the book aside, took him up, and danced round with him, then set him down among his toys, and went back to smooth out the crumpled leaves. He was soon by her side again, reaching up to the table with one hand, while he steadied himself with the other: "Me book, mama, me book." Once more she left her occupation, and fetched his outdoor things in order to go out with him.

This he would not have on any terms. He made himself as stiff as a poker, but she was determined that out he should go. They remained in the garden for an hour, and he amused himself while he was there.

While she was taking off his things again in the parlour, he stretched his disengaged hand towards the table: "Me book, mama, me book," saying it with the most coaxing tone and look of which he was capable. She thought it the best way to appear deaf to it, and gave herself up to cutting bits of paper, in order to gum them over the torn leaves. It was slow work, and all the time he stood, and begged, and prayed, giving

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little stamps, and stretching himself up: "Me book, mama, me book."

"He will stop some time," she thought, but he was still persevering when she had accomplished her task.

She was very anxious to leave his society for that of the characters in the book, who were certainly much more amusing, but she did not wish to be cross, and so began to play the flute—that is to say, she moved her fingers as though she were playing a piccolo, whistling at the same time; a performance in which she had a good deal of practice.

He pulled and dragged at her dress, and she replied with her flute. She became quite merry over it, and her merriment increased when he became angry, and called out "No, no," to her playing, and cried, and hit her. The flute playing became much quicker; he would not leave off, nor would she; the spirits of the Kurts were in every chink and corner. Then the child threw himself down on his back on the floor, drumming with his heels and screaming in good earnest. She played on, but more softly, for she felt that it was actually he who had won, while she was teasing him.

She could not take up the old fight again at once. In one moment the flute-playing changed to crying—helpless, inconsolable crying. The boy, who in the midst of his anger, had kept a sharp watch on her, was so astonished that he forgot to scream. She had been suddenly seized by her old dread, and neither saw nor heard any-



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thing, till she felt something warm against one of her hands. She had let it hang as she flung herself backward in her misery, raising the other to her face. She lifted her head, and looked into a wondering face, the tear-stained face of her own red-haired boy.

As soon as he saw her look at him, he put up his lips for a kiss, stretching out his hands to her. So the little flat nose was lifted up to the big one, and she murmured, and prattled, and fondled him, all over his face and head, as he held his arms round her neck. She did not take the book again. She kept him instead, and he never once looked towards the table where it lay. That was their last great struggle. There were a thousand lesser ones, of course, but never one which lasted more than a few minutes.

## CHAPTER II

### ON THE MOUNTAIN

TOMASINE always had her boy under her own care ; the lively, clever child needed a watchful eye ; but all the same she looked forward to his fourth birthday with good courage, and on that day something chanced, which made her form a determination.

Tomas had had several playfellows ; as he was accustomed to be alone he always wanted things his own way, so he had not been very good-natured.

On his fourth birthday he received, among other presents, a book about brothers and sisters, which told how good brothers were to their sisters, so indulgent and helpful ; this was illustrated by sketches in which the little brother always led his little sister by the hand. Tomas derived another idea in the meantime from the book ; he asked "Why he had not a sister too ? Could he not get one ?"

Tomasine Rendalen had certainly often remembered that he had a sister, but not as a matter which concerned herself ; it did not seem to her of any

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further consequence, but he begged so continuously, that she began to think a little more seriously about it. Suppose his sister should be in want? The property had been John Kurt's, and it had prospered greatly, thanks to his own plan, that of extending the gardens further up the hill, thus making them nearly twice as large. John Kurt's child must be properly provided for, there ought to be no doubt about it.

She made inquiries about the child, and learned that her little namesake lived with her grandmother, Marit Stöen, "Mother Stöa," as they called her, the widow of the pilot who had gained a great reputation on that coast. Marit Stöen lived up on the mountain, therefore to the left of "The Estate": Tomasine decided to see the child.

As there was no hurry about it, she determined to do so the first fine Sunday. As it chanced, the weather for a number of Sundays was bad, so it was full summer before one came which tempted her to go. Andreas Berg accompanied her.

The road to the mountain led to the left from the market-place, past the new churchyard, and further out into the country. But after that, when they turned towards the mountain, the way was more of a quagmire than a road.

Till that time the poorer people of the town had been allowed to build as they liked, and live as they could, and a regular road was only just being constructed. Down by the sea, the boats lay side by side, as close together as possible, for the left side of the mountain sheltered them. All round the boats, and in them, were a number of

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children, mostly little ones, and there was as much noise as if there were a thousand of them.

Tomasine wondered if the one she sought were there as well. She looked into each wild little face to see if she could find anything familiar. It was not a pleasant occupation. The rough children gathered round her in a swarm, when she inquired for Marit Støen, and at least twenty pointed up the hill. But she could not distinguish what they said to her all together. Nor did she wish to stay, but, with Andreas Berg, began to climb all the corkscrew turnings of the road.

The shouts from below followed her, but none of the children, so that she concluded that none of them had anything to do with Marit Støen.

It was a rough road, over the solid rock for the most part, though here and there a step had been made, and now and then it had been slightly hollowed.

It turned from left to right and from right to left; there were not four houses standing on the same level. And how extraordinary many of them were! Some nothing more than a ship's caboose, with a broad penthouse over it. There were several with the stairs leading to the upper story built outside, and, in one or two, they went right across the roof, to an attic room which had been added later. Many were so built that the lower story had its exit to the west, with the road on a level with the door, but the upper story had an exit to the east, for there the road and door were still on the same level.

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Almost all the houses had odd outbuildings, mostly boats standing up, with one end cut off, though in some cases boats were used as roofs, by being turned upside down and supported by walls of boards or stone. Little strips of garden wound in and out everywhere, often in the most unlikely places, where they were so narrow that two turnips could hardly grow side by side. Rank odours of all sorts, sometimes pleasantly modified by the smell of tar, hung over the whole mountain, rising and spreading as a rich offering up into the Sabbath sky—all according to the ordinary customs in that part of the world.

The noise of the children down by the sea came ringing up the hillside like a constant chime, now and then broken by a cry. A cock crowed; a dog on board one of the ships in the harbour barked at a passing boat, and was answered by some shaggy comrade on the mountain. Otherwise all was still; they only heard their own steps crunching on the gravel, and, as they got higher up, something like the frantic screaming of a child.

Tomasine looked out over the islands, and the Sound, away to the open sea—shining and still and clear under the sky. In the streets of the town a few people were walking about, and, in some places, little groups of children. But it was too far off for any sound to mingle with the shouts of those below.

To the right lay "The Estate," the first column of smoke, just curling from the kitchen chimney; all round here the chimneys had been

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smoking for a long time, and a little smoke hung here and there over the town.

The day was warm. They toiled, perspiring, up the mountain-side, and she thought of those who, after a day's hard work, had every evening to climb these twenty, thirty, or even fifty stages for supper, wood chopping, and bed.

She did not meet a single person, though she saw several, mostly old men, sitting before the doors with their pipes. The working men generally slept till dinner time on Sundays, and the women were all by the kitchen fires. Here and there an idle lass might be seen, sitting on a step, chatting to a girl-friend who had most likely come up to join in the evening's amusements. Or perhaps a young sailor, who, with his pipe in his mouth, and his hands in his pockets, leant over a wall talking to a girl who stood shyly before him.

Little more than half-way up they came upon a party of lads and girls who lay or sat round a large flat stone. There was no noise or talking; Tomasine did not know they were there, until she was close upon them. They were in the very worst of the smells, but that did not seem to affect them. What could they be engaged in? There was nothing to show it. She inquired the way, and one or two half rose, while one, who was older, answered her, pointing to a red house with white painted window-frames.

Tomasine had just wiped her spectacles and she could see the house, but she also saw distinctly by their manner that they all knew her, and every

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one guessed just what she wanted at Mother Støa's. No one said anything, but she heard a little tittering and whispering when she had gone by.

She asked Berg what they could be doing, since they were all so quiet; and he replied that he believed that the boys were playing cards, and the girls looking on, but that, as it was at the time of the Sunday sermon, they hid the cards away if a stranger went by. She began to reflect on the difference between the working people in a little Norwegian town and those of a large foreign city, raising thereby many old memories. But something occupied her along with her thinking, a disagreeable something which would not leave off. What was that? Yes, it was the same frantic screaming from up the hill. Now that she came nearer, she recognised it, and it brought a painful feeling with it. It was her son's old, spiteful scream. There was no doubt of it—the same to such a degree in tone of voice, in description, and vigour, that it tortured and stabbed her. Could it be his sister who was up there scoffing at her? She had been hot before, and now she was in a glow; some of the old dread seized upon her, bewildering thoughts from the old days, of struggles with her son. But, "Frue, you are going too fast," called Andreas Berg from lower down the hill; she could hardly see him, her glasses were dim; she took them off and wiped them, and her eyes as well, drew a long breath and began to laugh. Berg came up slowly. The child's crying continued, but now that she had recovered her senses,

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she noticed that it came from the right, while she could see Marit Stöen's house, the red one with white window-frames, almost exactly before her on the slope to the left ; it was the largest house up there, and undoubtedly the one she had seen, she could not be mistaken ; she felt quite light-hearted as she walked towards it.

They could not go straight to it, but were obliged to make a circuit and come back along Marit Stöen's garden fence, which had also been painted, though evidently not so recently.

The two windows of the house looked out towards the garden, and there was an extensive view from them, but the door was in the end wall to the left, to which a porch had been added, with a few steps leading up to it. All was quiet here, inside and out, but the jubilant voices of the little ones below, and the screams of the angry child from the other side, further away, met in the air.

The garden, along which they passed, was the largest they had seen on the mountains, though certainly neither it, nor the house, were what one would call well kept. But there was comfort, or whatever one might call it : Tomasine hesitated for the right word. She now saw a child with dark hair and bright, wondering eyes, who got up from the steps, letting something fall from her lap, as she ran quickly into the house-place. Immediately afterwards there appeared a tall elderly woman, with dark untidy hair, and a handsome and intelligent, though rather dirty face. The woman at once recognised Tomasine, who now came up the steps and entered the porch.



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"Have you come to see us, Frue?" she asked, smiling.

Tomasine was again busy with her eternal spectacles, and when she put them on again, the woman had tidied up the place as well as she could, with the little girl clinging with both hands to her skirt, so that, however the woman turned, the child was hidden from the strange lady. Andreas Berg remained outside. Marit Støen apologised for her untidy room, with a pleasant voice and simple skill. It was getting on to dinner-time, she said, and everything certainly ought to be very different. But there had been a dance there the evening before. They like to keep it up a long time, you see. She would still less like to ask the lady to come into the parlour, for it was even worse, she said, laughing. It was by no means a small sum that she made by letting the room, and by the coffee she sold. Her room was the largest on that side; for the mountain was divided in two as it were. "The people here will have nothing to do with those on the other side." And she laughed again.

Tomasine Rendalen had taken a seat, but when she began to look round the room, she found that the spectacles must come off again. She was warmer than she had supposed. As she took them off, she asked after the child's mother. The woman replied that Petrea was married.

"Married!"

"Yes, to a mate of the name of Aslaksen. He was a smart, clever fellow, and he would have her. They did not live here any longer," she

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said, and proceeded to explain their circumstances in detail. "Aslaksen would soon get a ship."

The child peeped now and again from behind her grandmother's skirts, and each time Tomasine glanced towards her. She had a shock of dark hair like her grandmother's, and in other respects was a blending of John Kurt and the woman standing before her—a blending which, she could not deny it, gave her a feeling of aversion. And yet the little thing was pretty. She had undoubtedly Kurt's wild eyes, but there was laughter in them as well as wildness.

"So the child remains with you?" said Tomasine, pointing with her parasol to where she was hiding.

"The child, yes, she's all right," answered the grandmother, while she patted her grandchild's head. "John Kurt, he paid for Petrea, as soon as ever she had her misfortune. And had a christening, so grand as you would hardly believe, and along a' that, he gives her a savings-bank book with a hundred specie-daler in it, and his father gave her another on top of it with just as much in it again." And Marit Støen began to cry from sheer gratitude, because John Kurt had given two hundred daler to his own child.

Up to that time Tomasine had had no idea of this "Have you any of the money left?" she asked.

"I should think we have some of it left," laughed Marit; "why that is a likely idea that the little 'un could want it all." She laughed, and again took hold of the child's curly head, and drew

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it towards her. But the little one slipped back again directly.

"Is she not very much in the way, now you are alone and have to work?"

"Oh! as for that, no. We are not so particular as all that comes to. She sits herself away somewhere;" and she turned half round, laughing, towards the child behind her.

"Is she easy to manage—not passionate?"

"Oh! not so bad," laughed Marit; "and she's so comical as well, poor little thing." And she now forcibly pulled her forward, the child still struggling against her. "Now, now, don't be such a silly."

Tomasine, however, did not wish to come into close contact with the child. So she got up, and looked round the house-place. The hearth was in the corner of the inner room; close by the window stood the table, with the remains of breakfast on it; a coffee-cup and a milk-bowl, with the dregs still in them.

On the wall opposite, and also on that between the fire-place and the door, hung some daguerreotypes, and two or three pictures were nailed up as well. The daguerreotypes, of course, represented Aslaksen and Petrea. Fru Rendalen passed these without looking at them. The pictures were, one a large ship in full sail, the others, the new Emperor and Empress of the French. As Tomasine had never seen any likeness of the latter she went up to them. The Emperor, who had a large nose, looked about twenty-four; the Empress was but lightly clad,

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though she looked all the same a very innocent little girl of hardly sixteen.

"They are only the sort o' things they carry about to sell," explained Marit. "I thought it would be amusing like to have her. She was not born to it, nor, for the matter of that, was he."

Tomasine was now opposite the open door. "Good gracious!" she exclaimed, "what child can that be who is always screaming?"

Marit laughed. "Oh! that's Lars Tobiassen's boy, that is."

"He never does anything else but scream," was suddenly heard from the little girl behind her grandmother's gown. She came forward in her excitement. Then, frightened at the sound of her own voice, she hid her head again.

"Perhaps the lady knows Lars Tobiassen?" inquired Marit.

Tomasine noticed something in her voice. "No, what is he?"

"It is rather a difficult job to say, that," answered Marit. "He's such a lot of things. He's a hard drinker, he is. He's turned butcher lately, for they say as drinking won't do no harm in that business. Have you never seen him?"

"No, why do you ask me?"

"Ah, I don't hardly like to say anything about it," and she laughed rather slyly.

"But why not?"

"Well, I only says what others says to me. It was not as found it out," and she laughed again.

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"What is said, then?"

"Well, folk do say that he's a Kurt too. Not any of them last ones, but a bit further back."

She saw this made some impression on Tomasine, and hastily added, "Like enough, it's nought but talk. He's like no Kurt that ever I saw. He's a rare fighter, he is."

"Some of the Kurts have been that too," answered Tomasine, by way of saying something; and she turned to the window and looked out.

"Yes, I've heard that," answered Marit; "there are two sorts of 'em. Some fat and dark, and others just as thin; but they have always been good-natured, the most of 'em. Folk can say what they will, but to the poor people . . . ." Her hand sought the child.

Tomasine turned at the moment and beckoned to Marit. Through the window they could see a number of people beyond the garden-fence. Andreas Berg was there as well, talking to some of them, perhaps to keep them there, and prevent them from coming to the door. They were mostly young. Now she saw that they were the same whom she had passed down below, sitting round the flat stone; a few others might perhaps have joined them. They all stood staring up at the window.

"My, what a lot there are!" cried Marit.

"Do you see that ragged boy, with the fair curly hair?" asked Tomasine.

"Yes, he is easy enough to see," and Marit's voice showed that she understood what Tomasine

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wished to know. "He is the son of young Consul Fürst, and like enough to his father." It was true. That curly hair, those blue eyes, recalled the partner of many a dance. Tomasine blushed crimson. "Why, my gracious, and you did not know before, Frue? Well, it's my turn to ask you something now," she continued. "Do you know that lass over there, as is holding her petticoat on with her hand? She has pulled off the string, poor thing. Her, without much more on than her shift. Her with hair as is neither yellow nor red, and a ridiculous white skin. Dear me, *that* one over there. Can't you really see who she is?" Yes, Tomasine had done so long ago; she had had plenty of practice in the foreign schools in recognising parents by their children, and children by their parents. "Yes, she's Fröken Engel right enough, if any one chose to call her so," laughed Marit, "though she's not dressed in silks." Tomasine drew back from the window.

Again Marit laughed, though this time not altogether without malice. "One sees the wrong side of the world up here on the mountain." Tomasine hastened to say that she had thought of giving the child sixty daler a year. Here was the first thirty for the past six months. If Marit needed any more help, she must come and tell her. When the child was bigger, they would talk of what was further to be done with her. Marit stood with the money in her hand: "That really was something, far more than any one could expect; if everybody behaved like that when any

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one had a misfortune . . . ." And she began to cry again.

In the meantime the child had let go the dress, rousing up when she heard that there were people outside in the garden. She had sidled right into the porch. She now came rushing in again, while loud laughter from outside rang through the house. The little girl only said "Lars Tobiassen," seized her grandmother's dress with both her hands, and huddled it round her. Tomasine, frightened lest he should be coming in, went hurriedly to the door without even saying good-bye, tying her bonnet strings, which she had loosened, as she went. In so doing she nearly fell, and had a narrow escape of descending the steps quicker than she had intended. But Lars Tobiassen had just passed. The laughter seemed to have burst out as he clambered up the steps to the right. He was roaring drunk.

Tomasine came out just as, with his back towards her, he had surmounted the first obstacle. She noticed his close-cropped neck. Where had she seen that bronze bull-neck before, and the point of hair in the middle? Oh! Heavens, that fearful neck which had hung over her, the night her child was born. The eldest Kurt's neck: that was it. And the bull-necked man now called out, "Now just you wait—devil take you! I'll give you something to scream for, I will." Tomasine was down the steps, out of the garden, through the crowd; she would not hear that swearing again, nor the sound of blows, and not, oh! not that half-insane screaming. She rather flew than

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walked through the people, who made way for her. But barely sufficient, so that she jostled against several of them, and when the descent began, she sprang from step to step, fancying she heard laughter behind her, but only running on the faster. She was fit to drop, but would not give in. Notwithstanding all her efforts, she could hear behind her the incessant terrified cries of the child, the drunken voice, and a woman's passionate scream. Dogs woke up and barked, but not near enough to drown the shriek, that fearful shriek, until, thank God, the bells from the two churches in the town began to ring at the same moment, filling the whole air with their clangour. She had come to the flat stone where the young people had been. It was deserted now; she sank down on it, and burst into tears. At last Andreas Berg came after her. His dignified pace made her feel that she had behaved somewhat strangely. She dare not wait till he got up with her, but without looking round she walked on. Her knees trembled, but she would no longer allow herself to be hunted by phantoms. The blessed church bells saved her from hearing anything else, and they continued till she was right down at the bottom. The children were no longer there. It was dinner-time.

A quarter of an hour later she was sitting with her little boy in her lap. He was very much puzzled by her excitement and tears, assuring her eagerly that he had been "dood" the whole time. She thanked him for it over and over again, with caresses, hugs, and kisses, but cried all the more.



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Now she began to feel how bad it had been of her never to lay her hand on his little sister's head, although she had been "dood" too.

The boy's playthings lay strewn around him. She remembered the bit of firewood, with an apron round it, which his little sister had let fall when she ran frightened away from the door-step. Tomasine had noticed it, for she almost fell over it as she hurried away. But nothing had melted her. Yet the child could not help having the same father! No, it was Tomasine who had not been "dood" that morning.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CHILD

THE first result of this visit was that Tomasine felt she must have some one to talk to, for there were other bad inheritances in the world beside the Kurts'. She must gain further knowledge. Without hesitation she chose the man for whom she had the greatest respect, "Old Green."

Now as surely as the afternoon came old Green passed by. The way he took was along the garden, on the right, where the road used to run, and where a path still led up to the woods. This walk among the hills and woods was Dean Green's favourite one. Tomasine began to watch for him, but lately he had hardly ever been alone. Nils Hansen, the shoemaker, was generally with him, the greatest character in the town, and married to a lady whom Tomasine had known abroad, and who had been one of her friends.

One day, as Tomasine had stationed herself at the gate, to watch if the Dean were alone, she heard him and Hansen far down the slope. Mormonism was beginning at this time to be made known in the North by its first emissaries.

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The newspapers constantly contained something about this new teaching. Nils Hansen was talking loudly. "Mormonism," he said, "we are as good Mormons here as in America. How many wives has a man before he is married in church, and afterwards as well? The merchants are the worst, but there are others beside."

They had drawn nearer before the Dean answered. "Look you, Hansen. I take it for granted that the races which have attained to monogamy, actual monogamy. . . ."

"And what sort of thing may that be?"

The Dean stood still. "It means having one wife. Polygamy is having several wives."

"Oh! that's it, is it."

"The races which have really and truly come to be monogamists," continued the Dean, "are but few. The most part are still polygamists." They walked on again.

Nils Hansen agreed. "Yes, that is—devil take it—my opinion as well."

The Dean: "Progress consists in this, that the disgrace . . . ." She heard no further.

"There are bad inheritances in the world beside the Kurts," thought Tomasine again. "How otherwise could he have been endured: nay, even liked? No doubt he appealed to some secret feeling in most of them."

As she had not the courage to go straight down to Dean Green, she went first to Nils Hansen's. It was generally said of Nils Hansen, that he flourished, and that in the greatest prosperity, on the hatred of the whole town. His crime con-

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sisted in his having several years before mustered the lesser townsmen in a struggle against those of more importance, or rather in the fact that he had been victorious. He had taken the town councillorship from them, seized the pews in church, so that now every one had equal rank and place there. He had had everything supervised and the financial estimates inspected, in a way that the leading people looked upon as extremely wrong. His worse villainy admittedly was, that, aided by some pecuniary help from non-residents, he had established a bank for poor people, called the penny bank, which had helped a number of the lower orders, even in some cases bringing them quite to independence ; for all the vested interests, his sharp and amusing answers were like a wireworm at the root of a tree.

It had aroused incredible merriment when a school-mistress in the town, a pretty, fair woman, with more than usual endowments, and even with the expectation of a fortune, refused several eligible offers, to engage herself to rough, rude, shoemaker Hansen. She was desperately in love with him into the bargain. She smiled and blushed if he were so much as named, and it can be imagined what it was when he himself hove in sight—one shoulder a little higher than the other, by the way—with his odd face, blinking eyes, broad shoulders, and huge hands. Endless jokes were made behind their backs, because, both while they were engaged, and afterwards when they were married, she taught Hansen, and he boasted of it. But they afterwards felt the result

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of this schooling, and paid for it as well. She was older than Tomasine, and had once been some months with her in England. When Tomasine returned, Fru Hansen had been married a year, and was therefore somewhat outside the circle in which the former moved, though she often went to see her, for she was very fond of the healthy, clear-headed little housewife.

It was therefore with her that Tomasine was especially angry when it transpired what kind of man John Kurt was. Why had she not by a single word dissuaded her from taking him? After his death Laura Hansen had tried to have some talk with Tomasine, but in vain. But now the latter thought, "Perhaps most wives have something to complain of, and yet this does not prevent girls from marrying; so why should I have expected them to advise me to act differently from what they would have done themselves?" So she went down to Laura Hansen.

They lived in a small, old house on the market-place, next door to Fürst's. The queer building, with a narrow alley on one side and a large door leading to the rambling courtway on the other, was the inheritance which Laura had expected, and now possessed. She was a slender but well-grown woman, with an open countenance. Some people considered her sullen, some thought her shy: that depended very much on what was passing. By some she was called talkative, by others sparing of her words. She took both people and circumstances into consideration. The friends had not met for five years. Laura sat sewing in

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the room behind the shop, the one with the window towards the alley. She rose, astonished, flushed, and somewhat agitated. Tomasine was really once more in her house. They were both a little stiff at first. A little dark-haired, thick-set girl sat on a stool learning to sew. She looked solemnly up at them, but was soon sent out of the room. Her mother understood at once that they two, friends of old days, must be alone, and make it up together. And they did so.

After several introductory remarks, Tomasine laid her complaint against Laura and her other friends, considerably, but still clearly.

Laura answered : "When a girl does not allow herself to be hindered by the kind of life that John Kurt led, there is no use in any one else talking to her about it." Laura, for her part, had refused several men just because their conduct in that particular had been doubtful, or more than doubtful. But Hansen, she knew, was honourable in that respect as in others.

The tall Tomasine felt very small under little Laura's steady gaze and quiet words. She fell from the position of accuser to that of accused, and her fall was no trifling one. She had felt very superior up there for several years, and a few words spoken in the course of a minute or two had laid her low. She did not feel much respect for her own powers ; nay, for a moment, it made her unhappy to think how short-sighted she had been. She actually felt anxious to discover if she were equally stupid in other things, but she soon so far regained her balance as to

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understand that to look only at one side of things may be partly the fault of circumstances.

She sat there without speaking, without listening; she had fallen into a reverie. Laura took the opportunity of leaving the room to prepare some chocolate, and to ask her husband to take her place while she was away. This, however, he had not time for at the moment, but still was so pleased that Tomasine had come again, that he felt he must just put his head in at the door to say so. He had on his leather apron, and held a shoemaker's stirrup in his left hand. Tomasine rose to grasp the other, but he waved her back, laughing. It was not fit to touch. "I only wanted to say many, many 'good days' to an old friend," he said after his fashion, as he drew back. But at that moment little Augusta came in again from the shop. She heard her father. He popped his head in again. "Just look at her. I always say that a dark person ought to marry a fair one. That is just what our two young ones are." And he shut the door.

Augusta was unusually tall and strong for her age. She was a full year older than Tomas. When Tomasine called her and spoke to her, the child surprised her.

There was a serenity in her eyes and brow, and a quietness in her way of talking, more like a grown person than a child. She was a contrast to Tomasine's own nervous little "Red-head," who never asked three questions about the same thing—a most pleasant contrast both outwardly and inwardly. Little Augusta went on question-

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ing until the subject was clear to her own mind, and then would pass on to the next topic which came up.

Her hands were plump, but firm ; his, thin, freckled, restless in their very shape. Her hair was dark and unusually plentiful, notwithstanding which it made the smoothest plaits ; his stood up and stuck out in red bristles, which seemed to grow in layers ; it was never tidy unless it were close cropped. He was bony and thin ; she so plump, though thoroughly healthy. Tomasine recalled what she herself had been as a child. Why was not her child the same ? She felt something almost like envy ; to think that the little velvet jacket that Augusta wore was without a spot, though it was evidently far from new. Tomasine searched for one until it seemed to her that the whole little figure was solid soft velvet.

Her mother came in with the chocolate, and the ice being now broken, they found plenty of subjects of conversation, especially after Augusta had again been sent away.

Tomasine asked how the child had become so lovable, gentle, and sensible ; and was told that she had never been headstrong. " Not even at first ? " " Never, but clear-headed and staid from a tiny child."

The last thing that Tomasine wished was to say anything against her little Tomas, but the contrast was so great that somehow all that she had gone through was told, and what incessant care she had still to practice.

Laura received, during Tomasine's relation, a



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firm conviction that this state of things would in the long run prove too much for her, and therefore be dangerous for her health.

Accordingly they both went to Dean Green, and from that day forward the stately old gentleman, in his long-skirted coat and broad-brimmed hat, often took his way up the avenue, instead of round the garden, when he set out for his afternoon's walk. Beside this, Tomasine began, little by little, to gather her old friends about her again. Once more they strolled in the broad paths of "The Estate" garden, many of them with their children in their hands. So by degrees happiness and confidence entered into her life again, and peace as well.

For now, when Tomas's education was to begin, it was done in quite a different way from what she had imagined. He went to school—a school which she herself kept for him, and for a number of little girls, the children of her friends.

At first he thought this incredibly splendid. He was thoroughly happy, willing, even devoted; but after a while, when he heard from the other boys that it was a disgrace even to go about with little girls, he wanted to know why he should be condemned to do so. Could not his mother send them all home again and have boys there instead? He pleaded for this—he fumed, he cried; but the girls remained. If only he could make out what was the use of it all! What had he not to endure from the lads who attended the boy's public school, who had *men* for teachers. If he as much as put his head over the garden wall,

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he heard, "Petticoat boy!" "Mamma's darling!" "The women's prince!" "Miss Freckles!" Especially the last, for he was terribly freckled, regularly speckled with red all over his face and hands, added to which he had the most hopelessly red hair. Just think of a boy being called "A Freckle," "Miss Freckle," though he were nothing but a freckle amongst the band of girls. Goodness knows how he disdained them! If, however, he were so bold as to say so to them, and a boy with his heart in the right place is often impelled to do so, he cannot always keep his contempt concealed; well, if he did so he got a beating—a veritable, serious beating. From his mother? That would have been nothing; no, from those same wretched little girls. Some held him and half strangled him, and several more beat him. And this not as a joke. It hurt frightfully. And his mother stood there and laughed. She laughed till the tears came. She had to take off her spectacles and dry them. They would have no domineering little tyrant among them—those girls, no arrogant young master; though they were always ready, they said to him, to welcome a well-behaved little gentleman and pleasant companion. If he grimaced at them they were at him again, down with him again; it was one perpetual beating. When they had done, they curtsied to him, one after the other. There were such a number of them that it was mere fun to them. The worst, however, has not yet been told. He was desperately in love with one of the little girls. She knew it, the ungrateful little monkey, and his mother knew it as

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well. He was sure of that. It was principally on account of it that she had laughed so dreadfully. It was the worst of them, Augusta Hansen, Laura's daughter—Augusta, with whom he had eaten cherries. That is to say, they had taken them out of each other's mouths; first she out of his, as he held the stalk in his mouth close up to the fruit, and then he, in the same way from hers. Augusta, who had given him her sash to wear as a badge at the tournaments which he held . . . quite alone, by the way. Augusta, to whom in return he had given his whole collection of blown eggs; he had found every one of them himself. He had been obliged to ask his mother's leave to give them away, for it could not very well have been managed without. He had come behind her to whisper in her ear, he did not wish her to look at him while he did so. His mother had asked him if he were fond of Augusta, and he had confided to her that it was especially her hair, but that she was the most good-natured of the girls, and the cleverest as well. What Augusta said was always right. His mother had agreed with him in that. She had not laughed then, but now she stood and looked on while Augusta thrashed him, for it was Augusta's hand that thumped the hardest.

After such treachery—and this did not happen only once unfortunately; it happened very often—he would not speak to Augusta for several days; once he held out for three. He tried the same with his mother, but he could never contrive to keep grave when she looked at him. She always befooled him into laughing.

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He now essayed, by a more serious and regular manner of proceeding, to obtain a different adjustment of things for the future. This struggle really meant nothing more nor less than the right relationship between the sexes. Its depths he was truly far from having sounded, but his masculine instincts told him that it was all upside down, up there in the garden. Things must be altered. But there was never any "Hands off," as they say. It was Dean Green whom he suspected of being the cause of the worst of all this. Of one thing, at all events, he was certain. It was Dean Green's idea that he, like the girls, should learn to play the piano. No other boy had to strum like that. Tomas hated the long-coated parson, with his aquiline nose and bushy eyebrows; who was always about, and who smiled when he saw him. He hated him to that extent that, when he shot at a mark, he always tried to draw a picture of the Dean to shoot at, and then to hit his coat, his nose, or his eye. But, hit him as much as he would, no change took place; the piano-playing went on, the girls remained, and even if any day he brought some boys into the garden, they could never be alone—oh no! The detestable little girls were always hanging about, and then all the stories afterwards; any little thing that a boy might have said or done was used against him; he was done for, he never came again.

And they would say, too, that Tomas had tried to show himself off before his companions, and play the grown man. He always got a beating afterwards. Sometimes they divided his offences into

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several portions, and he was first beaten for one and then for another. Augusta was constantly drubbing him with the greatest heartiness, without the slightest remembrance of the cherries, or the eggs, or any of his little attentions. There is no telling the number of times that he renounced his allegiance and loyalty to her, but as Augusta did not care a rush, and went about just the same, with those thick plaits and sturday legs of hers . . . . Well, then he began to abase himself. He had to let her understand that he did not exactly disdain her, that perhaps it might be possible to obtain grace. She never seemed to notice him, and so it ended that he thought it was not worth remembering any longer.

One thing about Augusta was peculiar, she always really influenced the others without trying to do so ; she let others lead as long as they liked, she acted exactly in the same way whoever led and whatever plan they hit upon ; but whenever they got into difficulties it was *she* who found the way out.

Ah ! how Tomas admired her, how often he told her so ! and was annoyed that he could not let it alone. It was with her that he now began to take his music lessons, and from that time forth playing became his favourite occupation.

These first stormy years were followed by others, and he attained at last to such superiority, that he dared to acknowledge his comradeship with the girls. He settled down at last into accepting their help against other boys, when they challenged him from outside. Nay—who would

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have thought it ?—the time came when he fought for his valiant girl-friends, eager for the battle ; especially if one of the boys had called Augusta "Shoemaker's lass," or even "Sausage." He would gladly have gone to the death for her ; nor was this all boasting, for at nine years old he was severely mauled because, on this account, he would fight against ten or twelve at once, of whom three at least were older than he. That was the proudest moment of his life, as he lay with a fresh vinegar plaster on his head, and Augusta must come in and change it instead of his mother.

Now that there really was something worth talking about—not a word.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE LAST YEARS IN THE GARDEN

At this time a great change took place in Tomas's external life. For the first time he had a companion.

Some years back, there had died in the town a curate named Vangen, who had married a very enthusiastic Danish lady. They had led quite an Arcadian life together—literally without thought for the morrow.

People are always very kind at times of bereavement ; she managed to support her children and herself for the first few years, for those that followed there was no necessity to do so—she died.

Through Dean Green, her son Karl came to Fru Rendalen "on probation." He was at that time eleven. Karl Vangen was tall, slight, and dark, with a large head, his forehead being the most noticeable feature. He had gentle blue-grey eyes, in large sockets, a wide, straight mouth, which slowly expanded into a smile. He was quiet, and very modest, and rather uneasy in his new surroundings. When, at night, he went with

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Tomas into the room he now occupied, on the other side of the bath-room, he knelt down by the side of the new bed, which had been put up for him there, and prayed silently for a long time, his face buried in his hands. When he rose from his knees, he smiled across at his companion, with tears in his eyes, but he did not speak.

Tomas heard him afterwards sobbing under the bed-clothes. This lasted a long time. Tomas felt at last that he must cry too, but took care that the other should not hear him.

Every one was kindness itself to the new-comer, but no one so much so as Tomas. If he could have clasped himself round him like a belt, he would have done so.

Karl went to the Latin school, where he was received free, so the boys were separated almost all day, nor did they even study together when he came home.

Karl allowed himself but little leisure. He was slow at learning, but still was at the head of his class, and he wished to continue there; so that Tomas naturally could not see as much of him as he wished, or be so good to him as he wanted to be.

When Karl did at last come out he was tired, and did not go with Tomas very willingly.

He did not perhaps estimate all that Tomas had done for him, nor understand how the boy had waited for him, how glad he was to see him. He was the first companion that Tomas had ever had, but he himself had plenty.

The fact was, that Karl was too slow and gentle,



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always anxious about his clothes, perfectly obedient to anything that was said to him, and in this, and other things, a great contrast to Tomas.

At last Tomas discovered that Karl was just a girl, one more girl up there, and not, by a long way, so amusing as the others.

He soon began to call him Karoline. He mocked at him when he shivered, or was frightened about his clothes. And when he smiled good-naturedly, instead of being angry, Tomas would make his mouth wide by stretching it with his two forefingers.

That was so very funny that the girls began to take part in it. They praised Tomas for his chivalrous behaviour to them, and he was proud of it himself. But both he, and they, could be very unchivalrous towards Karl, without its striking them that they were so. As, for instance, when Tomas conceived the idea that every time Karl showed himself, they should rush at him, one after the other, and dust his clothes with their hands, because he was so frightened about them—he had had so few. So he was brushed and brushed till he began to cry, and was then immediately called "Say-your-prayers boy" and "Cry-baby." And this grew worse when they saw that Karl, though both older and bigger than Tomas, was nevertheless the weaker. So Tomas could show himself off, and at last they really ill-treated him.

Now, at the bottom it was not altogether disagreeable to Karl to be a martyr. It seemed something great to him. But the others soon discovered this, and would not for the life of them

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stand it. He was treated worse than ever from that moment.

But where was Augusta while all this developed itself?

Augusta was kind to Karl; indeed, the more the others teased him, the more good-natured she became. But she did not mix herself with what they took up. And besides, lately she had shrunk more and more from anything rough. Whenever Karl sought refuge with her, he was safe for the time being, so that it happened that he did so oftener and oftener, and at last constantly. He dare not enter the garden without her.

Tomas was too proud to appear to notice anything, but he made Karl pay for it.

One especial time, Tomas grumbled about this during a music lesson, and she answered that so it would continue until he became as good a boy as Karl, which he was far from being at present. Then he swore vengeance.

On Saturday afternoons, Karl always went to the churchyard, to put fresh flowers on his parents' graves. On the next Saturday, as he was going down with his basket, Tomas met him in the avenue, and asked him if he would promise not to talk any more to Augusta. But Karl, so accommodating in other things, would not promise this, not even when Tomas struck him. He struck him again and again, with all the strength he could muster, but Karl would not promise to give her up. Quite beside himself, Tomas kicked him in a dangerous manner; he gave a loud cry and dropped down. Tomas had him carried home, and

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rushed away for the doctor. When, his forehead bathed in sweat from anxiety and the speed with which he had run, he passed the place where Karl had fallen down, with his eyes fixed upon him, another image of his companion rose before him—that of the helpless, silent lad who had knelt down and prayed by his bedside the first evening in his new home.

Tomas kept this resurrection of the former Karl in his soul.

He hurried back home again before the doctor, in order that he might, as he passed the spot where Karl had fallen, knee down, unseen by any one, and cry and pray.

That evening his mother, Andreas Berg, and he sat by themselves in the parlour. Andreas Berg had come in at Fru Rendalen's request to tell Tomas the history of his father's (John Kurt's) childhood—to tell it in her presence without any reserve. Berg was a grave man, not free from severity. He had been made angry, more than once, by Tomas's performances with Karl. And he now related the various circumstances of John Kurt's life when a boy, related them without a single word of blame ; but this only made it fall the heavier. This was part of Berg's nature.

The mother did not feel it needful to add a single word.

She heard Tomas, late that evening, sobbing and crying beside Karl's bed, and the next day saw him talking to Augusta in the passage.

In the course of the day he had flung his arms round his mother's neck and cried. But he had

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said nothing, though it worked in his mind for a long while.

In the meantime it was determined that Karl's time of probation should end, and that he should be considered as a son of the house from that time. The doctor had declared that he would all his life feel the effects of the kick which jealousy and domineering had bestowed on him. And this had decided the question.

Another great revolution took place shortly afterwards. The girls who, together with Tomas, had enjoyed Fru Rendalen's teaching from the beginning, were so much more advanced in languages, not only than those of the same age at the girls' school, but also than the boys at the Latin school, that many people wished she would extend her classes and establish the girls school for the town up at "The Estate."

This desire, which became unanimous, was strongly pressed upon her. Dean Green was the most eager of all. How could she use her knowledge and powers of administration better? All the development of her character, all the experience of her life, led her to this goal. Think of the Kurts' house echoing with confiding, childish laughter; think that there, the rising generation of women would learn to raise themselves to independence, either in married life, or outside it. The subject symbolised itself in this way.

Very few of us have perhaps noticed that certain expectations and signs, fixed forebodings, chance remembrances, weigh far more in deciding our plans than the simple circumstances of the present time.

## THE LAST YEARS IN THE GARDEN

Tomasine Rendalen was no exception to this rule. She was, however, prudent enough to ask herself sometimes if she were fit for all that the Dean proposed in the school work. She suspected that he, like all reformers, was over-sanguine, demanding the work of three generations from one, and expecting a single man to give the result of a thousand. She also had good sense enough to doubt if a little more knowledge of languages, a little better teaching of history and similar acquirements, would seriously help forward morality and independence. But the symbol outweighed these objections of good sense. And it really did seem as if a distinct commission had been given to a special person. Here she was in the Kurt inheritance, well qualified for school work: that was undoubted. Fancy obliterating the evil example with a good one. She had had great practice in that. At all events, it gave her strength. Once determined, she exerted herself to make it go forward, and made others do the same.

She raised a new loan on her property and renovated the house from top to bottom. All the windows were removed and enlarged. The rooms on the ground-floor, on the right as one comes in from the great steps, remained as they were. But those on the left, in the wing and upstairs, were for the most part altered, in so far as that the doors between them were walled up, so that they only led into the long inner passage.

The great Knights' Hall on the left hand, just as one comes in from the steps, was made into a

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gymnasium. The pupils were to assemble there, and morning prayers were to be read in it as well. The double staircase in the passage, which led up to the first floor, was cut off from the entrance hall by a wall in which were two doors, one on each side. By this means Fru Rendalen kept the hall for herself. The famous steps only led to it, and to the Knights' Hall on great occasions.

The teachers had their separate entrance from the court yard, while the lower part of the great, empty, useless tower was converted into an ante-room. Outside, the plaster was removed from the walls, and the red colour of the bricks freshened up. It all looked like new. There was a great pilgrimage up there when it was all finished, and many good wishes were expressed for the new school.

Tomasine incurred considerable debt—she had to pay a large sum for the school which she took over. But from the first, the influx was unprecedented. Little girls from the country, nay, even from the nearest towns, were entered. They were boarded with different people, whom she recommended. She did not wish at first to have any in the house. She must regulate the school.

Sometimes it seemed to her that this simple state of things, a well-regulated school, was what she would never attain to. She got into difficulties, first and foremost, with the staff of teachers. They did not come up to the standard which she proposed. She took on trial, and discharged again, and endured all the discomfort

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and irregularity, all the over-exertion, which are the natural results of such a position, hoping for better days.

The constant wear and tear, the endless unrest, the anxious cares for money, goaded her on from day to day. The aim that she had originally set herself, the great aim, now seemed almost ludicrous. One thing appeared certain : it was losing her her son ; not his affection, still less his obedience, taken as a whole, nor was it his education ; but her influence on his character, their mutual confidence, her happiness in him. Something impetuous, fantastic, extravagant crept into his games, his plans, his expression, which she saw increase in a manner she deeply deplored. When she corrected him she saw a gloomy impatience in the nervous glance of his eyes. She felt herself condemned by his air of superiority.

Karl's company only increased this failing, for he was himself an enthusiast. She therefore begged Augusta to check the boy's hot mood, and to try to keep him steady by turning his mind to stern realities. But Augusta never entered into any controversy with him on the subject. So Fru Rendalen saw this tendency increase. This spoilt her pleasure in the school when at last, outwardly at any rate, it began to work well. She asked herself what, as a whole, she had gained by this hunted life beyond increased debt, and greatly increased anxiety. But now she was launched into it ; she struggled on from day to day ; a moment's pause would bring all in ruins about her.

Of all his mother's anxiety Tomas had not the

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slightest idea. He led a happy life, developing quickly. Karl's large amount of information helped him. Together they wove their day-dreams; together they loved. They devised the strange idea that they would devote themselves to the service and happiness of "the ladies," they and their comrades, for by degrees several others had been drawn into the circle. And there was more beauty, more variety, in all they hit on since boys and girls were constantly together.

Tomas's strength increased, but unlike his parents, he did not promise to be tall. He was remarkably well made, with a very erect gait. His well turned-out feet were so small that he could wear girls' shoes. He was also nearly as slim in the waist as a girl, but broad-shouldered. At twelve years old he took the first boy's prize at a gymnastic display, which had been inaugurated in that part of the country. He had a powerfully shaped head, his cheekbones strongly marked. His nose had become much bigger than his mother's, which gave him occasion for much fun, she always answering that his was at least as broad as hers at the end. He had small, finely cut lips, his eyes were not large, and seemed smaller still because he frowned and blinked. They were grey in colour, with a restless but sharp expression. His forehead was fair like his father's, but his face, neck, and hands were so covered with freckles, that they were as red as his hair, which stood on end, and was generally untidy.

By the side of the tall dark Karl, with his heavy



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forehead, hollow eyes, wide, straight mouth, his gentle expression, and slow nature, he seemed to sparkle. He filled his mother with perhaps greater anxiety than there was need for. He had become a true friend to Karl. He loved him heartily. He generally did either love or detest ; there was no moderation in him. Tomas was in his fourteenth year when, in the autumn, it was arranged that he should take a voyage with his uncle, who was the master of a vessel, to Hamburg, and from thence to England and back.

The trip had been talked of since the early summer, but had been postponed. Tomas, who was studying privately, could start at any time, and it would be more manly to go at the time of the autumn gales. His preparations were complete ; they were only waiting for a fair wind.

One Saturday afternoon, Augusta and he were sitting up in an apple-tree—he on a branch to the right, and Augusta on one to the left. They had come to gather the fruit, but the linen bags, which they had spread round them, still hung limp. She had taken hold of a branch, on a level with her head, and rested her head on her arm. She sat and listened to Tomas. They had seen the new doctor, Knut Holmsen, go in to Fru Rendalen, and this wonderful new doctor was one of those whom Tomas loved. He had lately been reading with him about the Gracchi in Mommsen's Roman History, and it was about them that he was talking. There was nothing equal to the Gracchi in their own history ; they were his ideals. But in the midst of an ardent disquisition it occurred to

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him that if he were to be the Gracchi, Augusta must be their mother. There was nothing grander for a woman than to be the daughter of Scipio, and the mother of the Gracchi.

But Augusta had no desire for this. She could not wish that the mother of the Gracchi should live after her sons were killed. Augusta was always so frightened of death, there was something ugly about it. She sat there with her head on her arm, and said this quietly, as though to herself. She looked very sweet.

Or was she tired? he asked. No, she was not tired, but she wished so much to be quiet. Well, they could easily sit a little longer. She altered her position, and they went on talking.

Supposing the mother of the Gracchi met her sons in heaven? But would the Gracchi and she go to heaven? They did not believe in Jesus. After some discussion the children agreed that now they could be taught about Jesus, and therefore naturally they had gone to heaven.

But after that, what would they do there? Augusta shuddered, Eternity was so frightful. She hid her face, and when she lifted it again, she had been crying. He sat a long time and looked at her.

"Listen, Augusta," he said, "neither of us will die till we have grown dreadfully old, so old that we cannot even walk. It can't be the same then, can it?"

Augusta smiled. "That time you gave me the everlastings, you said I was to think of you when you were dead, you know."

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"Yes, I was so frightfully miserable that day, and then I had got that picture of King Edward's sons. Augusta!"

"Well?"

"At sea, in the autumn gales—they are often very dangerous, the autumn gales, you know—I shall have myself lashed fast, and I will write to you exactly what I think. And then you must write down what you think when you read it."

"That might prove dangerous," laughed Augusta. She was older.

He felt embarrassed, so there was silence. But all the time he looked at her plump figure, good-natured face, her heavy braids, and long eyelashes. She sat looking down—yes, she had grown now, she had quite a figure. And those wrists, those characteristic firm hands. He sat and gazed at her for a long time, and then said, "Augusta."

"Well?"

"Karl will write to me every day. Mother has promised him the money. Could not you put a few lines in too—eh!"

"Every day, Tomas! That would be very often."

"But all the same . . . ."

"Interesting things won't happen to me every day, you see, Tomas; it would be only stupid."

She looked at him simply. "But," he answered, "people who care for each other always do write."

He was crimson and turned away. She would be sure to laugh. But she did not laugh. In a

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few minutes he heard her say (he did not turn round), "Yes, yes, then I will," and she devoted herself to gathering the apples.

At the same time Fru Rendalen and the doctor were standing by the parlour window.

She looked by turns at him, and out towards the children in the apple-tree. The doctor had just told her that Lars Tobiassen had become raving mad, and that his son had been frightened, and gone mad also. He had been near it for a long time. "'Kurt inheritance,' the people on the mountain say there have been so many mad Kurts there, men and women." Fru Rendalen had answered that she was aware of that, and that both before Tomas's birth, and for some time afterwards, she had felt frightened. She was safe now though — "although," and she laughed, "Tomas has something unreasonably exaggerated and fantastic about him."

She looked inquiringly at the doctor, who answered, "Yes, his nerves are good for nothing."

Dr. Knut Holmsen was one of those men who are foreordained to be bachelors, though some chance may drift them into matrimony; who never trouble themselves to think or feel with any one else, but always look at things from their own point of view. So now he blurted out this answer as a matter of course. It frightened her, however, terribly.

"Could Tomas become mad?" she asked.

He had not intended to say that; he therefore answered, "Not he, but his children."

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She came and stared at him, her face as white as a sheet, and from him out into the garden.

"Do you know what you are saying?" she asked.

Holmsen coloured, for this rough man was particularly faint-hearted. And, to relieve his embarrassment, he began to talk about a book which he had just read, one that every one ought to read—

"Prosper Lucas on Heredity" (*L'hérédité naturelle*).

The two young people in the apple-tree soon afterwards saw Dr. Knut Holmsen go down to the town, accompanied by Fru Rendalen, and a little later she returned, with two large volumes under her arm.

The following evening Tomas sailed, and remained away for two months. At both the ports which he visited he found letters, written every day since he sailed by the faithful Karl, as well as a few lines enclosed by his mother, but not a line from Augusta. She was ill, had a heart complaint—an enlarged heart, it was said. And Tomas remembered that latterly she had always wanted to be in the open air. She had pains in her heart, but a courageous girl like Augusta would naturally never succumb. She would get quite well again.

The ship returned to port late one evening. No one at "The Estate" had any idea of it before Tomas flung himself on to his mother's neck, in the parlour, as she sat there over her accounts.

"Tomas?" she exclaimed, almost as though

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she were seriously frightened, and that made him all the more crazy with delight. He clung to her portly person with all his strength . . . then . . . he noticed that she was crying. Astonished, he relinquished his hold, looked at her, and flung himself down with his head on the table sobbing loudly.

Augusta had died two days before. The next morning he went with his mother down to the shoemaker's house to take some flowers; awestruck, and with his eyes red with crying. Fru Rendalen chose to enter by the door at the side of the house: she wished to go in by the back way. And thus Nils Hansen saw her from the workshop, and came out at once.

Tomas was a little behind. It affected him so much to go in by the old well-known way, that he could not come forward directly. When Nils Hansen observed him, Augusta's playfellow and greatest friend, he burst into violent weeping and left them. It was just the same with Fru Hansen. She was in the large room, occupied with the dead. Her second girl, two years younger than Augusta, was sitting on the floor beside her mother, when Fru Rendalen opened the door and went in.

Laura came towards her and thanked her for coming down again. She appeared composed, but when the heart-broken Tomas came forward with his flowers, she sank down on a chair and began to cry violently, the child crying with her. Tomas could not bear it. He laid the flowers down, he did not know where, and ran home again. He had seen the heavy braids under the

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white band, a sleeping face, and the everlastings between the folded hands. He knew them again by the ribbon.

What a tie Fru Rendalen felt the school at this time, for the sore little heart constantly yearned towards her. She was so anxious about Tomas, lest his tendency to extravagance of feeling should receive fresh nourishment from his sorrow, nor could she discover how she might be able to prevent this without depriving him of his one consolation. She was astonished when she saw that Augusta's death had had just the contrary effect.

Augusta had feared death, perhaps immortality still more; he was convinced of this, and so would not try to think of her there. It seemed like tormenting her. Most children shudder at the thought of being immortal.

It was Karl in especial who wished to dwell on this theme, but he had to be silent, Tomas would not allow it. It was against her wishes to try to think of her as dwelling in Eternity, he was sure of that. Karl gave in; it was not immortality itself which his friend doubted about, so he humoured him.

Did not Tomas ever try to bring Augusta up before his mind? Yes, whenever he ran his fingers over the piano, he was in her company—they had sat side by side there.

It was of the past that he thought. His mother was astonished when one day, having given her a rather quick answer, he returned at once and threw himself upon her neck; she was

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so used to his hasty ways that, when he was not actually rude, she often took no notice ; she looked at him, "What is it ?" He coloured and laid his head down on her shoulder, as he always did when he did not wish her to look at him while he was speaking. "Yes ; once when I answered you sharply, Augusta came out after me on to the steps, and said, 'Tomas, you should never answer your mother like that.' I did not think anything of it then, but now—now—I remembered it when I got out on the steps."

During this time they read bits at random out of Lucas's work. The wonderful proofs of heredity in talents and character, coming out even after very long intervals, impressed Tomas strongly. He had a perfect mass of questions which he took to the doctor.

Little by little he occupied himself as before, but he became quieter.



## CHAPTER V

### THE LECTURE

ONE spring afternoon in the beginning of May, fourteen years later, a great number of people took their way up the avenue to "The Estate." *Real-Kandidat* Tomas Rendalen was to give a lecture at the opening of the new gymnasium which had been built in the courtyard there ; using the opportunity to explain the plan on which he intended to conduct the school ; he proposed to take it over the following August. It was known that this had been his intention, even before he became a student at Christiania ; that he had no other object in life, either then or later ; that after he had passed his examinations, he had taught in different boys' and girls' schools, and during several years had made himself familiar with both, in Germany, Switzerland, France, England, and last of all in America ; he said that it was in the last-named country that he had especially found what he wanted.

He had declared that the development of his whole life might be found in the lecture which he

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would deliver that day, and this seemed strange to every one ; all became curious.

During the four or five months that he had been at home he had had the gymnasium built, having turned the Knight's Hall into a place where chemistry and physics could be studied ; people did not clearly understand what these were, but they hoped to find out some day. The tower was turned into a little observatory.

There had been, for some time past, a continual delivery and unpacking of what Rendalen called school apparatus ; the most wonderful specimens were shown to the children. These purchases and his endless journeys had cost no small sum. How had the money been provided ? Quite by chance Fru Rendalen had discovered that the woods had been sold from " The Estate " on different terms ; some before, and some after, the farms to which they belonged had been disposed of. Some of these woods had been merely sold for clearing, and the land itself thus still belonged to " The Estate." But as it had lain long unused, the fact had been forgotten, and the woods had been by degrees absorbed into the surrounding properties. Fru Rendalen lost several lawsuits over this, but she gained others, and it was therefore good Norse timber which had paid for Karl's and Tomas's studies.

Tomas had taken up science, Karl theology ; both of them going abroad. Karl had come home again after two years' absence. Tomas had travelled. During the few months that he had been at home he had given lectures to the girls

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in the senior classes, especially on Natural Science. For example, he explained to them the very newest discoveries in regard to the activity of the brain, showing them large diagrams. When the children repeated to their parents how these discoveries were made, they began to wish to hear about them as well. And it was not rare to see elder sisters, mothers, or sometimes even fathers, sitting squeezed in among the children in the class-room, listening to him. It can thus be easily understood why the gathering on the present occasion was so large.

Tomas was an ugly, red-haired, freckled fellow, with a somewhat broad nose, and grey screwed-up eyes, with no eyebrows, or at all events no visible ones, and with a thin-lipped mouth like his father's. Yet it was said that the whole school was crazy about him! People wanted to see and hear what on earth it was all about; three ladies to one gentleman assembled up at "The Estate."

A path had been made to the right from the great steps, past the front of the house, and further round the wing, to the courtyard at the back, which was the usual school road. The new gymnasium was in the courtyard as well. There was a man stationed at its entrance to-day, and a crowd of people stood before it who had been refused admittance, and who protested loudly against this treatment.

It was Andreas Berg who was on the watch that only "parents" came in.

This had been clearly stated in the invitation,

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but it had been overlooked or misunderstood, or else people thought they might as well try all the same, and they were now making a disturbance over it.

They were, of course, mostly young.

There was great merriment when some elder person, who was not recognised as a parent, was refused admission. Anton Dösen, called also "French Dösen" because he had lived several years in France, and who now had a shop for French fancy goods, almost exactly opposite the Frökener Jensens at Bommem, presented himself as a "father," and wished to enter—he had never been married, this same French Dösen. Immense amusement!

The solemn, unmoved Andreas Berg turned him back, and French Dösen asked what the deuce was wanted before he could get in! Must he go to the town, and get the clergyman's attestation that he was a father?

French Dösen had always had the privilege of trumpeting forth his peccadilloes. It amused people to hear of them. His shop was much frequented, notwithstanding his light morals and talk. His competition with the two crooked Frökener Jensens, as regarded millinery, was not hazardous. But see, there actually are the Frökener Jensens, and they have got in! Enormous delight in the assembled company. For there could be no doubt that neither Fröken Jensen had had a child. Heavens forfend!

Andreas Berg explained that that was because they had a niece at school. The reason they had

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no children? No! that they were admitted. They stood in the place of parents.

"But," observed Dösen, "it must be more to be a father, than to stand in a father's place." Great applause! Beside, did he not stand in the place of a father to all those to whom he gave food and wages? Did he not now? Andreas Berg would admit nothing.

At this moment arrived the town bailiff and his wife. Berg would not allow them to pass, any more than the others, for they were not parents, nor had they any adopted children at school. Dösen cried "Bravo," and clapped his hands, and a number of others with him.

There was a storm of laughter, for the town bailiff was well known and little liked. So they looked forward to some fun.

He was so furious for the moment that he could not speak, but stuttered and gesticulated. He was a tall thin fellow, with spectacles, and a smile—not of good-humour or anything of that kind—no, there was a sourness about it which was impressed on his whole countenance.

At last he found his tongue, and asked Andreas Berg if he were mad. And his wife, who dearly loved on such occasions to push herself forward, remarked that no meeting in the town could be closed to the town bailiff.

This did not make the very smallest impression on Andreas Berg. He busied himself in opening to some others who came up, and who really were parents, and shut the door again.

Dösen now took up the town bailiff's cause.

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Andreas Berg ought to understand that if the town bailiff had no children, that was not his fault, nor his wife's either. Terrific applause! "The paradise of parents could not be closed against the bailiff on that account, as long as . . . ;" he could go no further. For the bailiff asked if he were mad. "Yes, in your cause, sir," answered Dösen. What peals of laughter!

At the same moment shoemaker Nils Hansen came up with his little wife. Hundreds of times in his life the bailiff had asked him if *he* were mad, so Nils Hansen laughed as soon as he heard the words.

"Who is mad now?" he asked.

"Andreas Berg," answered the town bailiff.

"No, I," shouted Dösen.

"It's the town bailiff himself," cried out several in the crowd.

"Imagine," said the bailiff to Nils Hansen, "Andreas Berg has had the impudence to—to—to—prevent my wife and me from—from—going in——"

One saw that Nils Hansen found this amusing, but Laura, on the other hand, was astonished, and questioned Berg, "Dear me, how is this?"

But if she thought she would induce Berg to answer, she was very much mistaken. He opened the door for them. "*Værsgo*," he said, and they felt obliged to go in, but they heard Dösen call after them: "The bailiff and his wife may not go in, because they have no children."

This was also heard inside the hall; a sound of laughter from a hundred voices came rippling

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out ; and another wave of boisterous mirth rolled towards the door as it was closed after Nils Hansen. While conversation went on in the hall, a new excitement arose outside. The sheriff had come. His wife had brought a lady, a stranger, with her, whom Berg would not admit ; only "parents" were invited, he repeated firmly. He knew this lady was called "*Fröken* \* Krieger" ; she had bought some flowers from him.

The sheriff, often nicknamed "the ladies' man," a fair-haired man with a sharp waggish face, looked up at the two dismayed ladies ; they were both standing at the top of the steps, very red in the face. His wife had always supposed that any lady *she* brought would of course not be refused admittance, and yet this had occurred ; they were fairly "caught out," both she and her friend—a butt for the laughter of Dösen and his companions, and stared at pityingly by a number of people whom she did not know, for she was but newly come to the town. She was a handsome woman, with an intellectual face, tall and slender, but she looked quite terrified now ; her eyes wandered helplessly from one to another, and at last they fixed themselves imploringly upon her husband, who stood down below with the others and laughed at them. "Is it so *dangerous* for *Fröken* Krieger to come in ?" she asked. Roars of laughter. Apparently this annoyed Berg, he came up without warning and pushed the lady gently to one side in order to open the door for some more people. A number

\* Miss,

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of ladies, all married and with children at school, now came up and passed in ; the unlucky wife of the sheriff tripped down the steps, her friend following her, looking rather embarrassed ; there was a short exchange of words which ended in the departure of the friend ; she would go alone, and ran off when the gallant sheriff offered to accompany her ; the sheriff himself being nearly run over by a carriage with two large Danish horses, driven by a coachman in grey livery.

It was Consul Engel and his wife who were arriving. They drove right up into the courtyard because Fru Engel was delicate. Nothing could have been more careful, more tender, more charming than the manner in which the consul helped his wife from the phaeton ; he almost carried her in. He was a handsome man, with a noble face ; his well-known smile was more friendly than ever as he passed through the crowd with his gentle burden. She was handsome too, the expression of her eyes wise and painful, or rather perhaps painfully wise ; the same expression lay in the lines of the mouth and in the thin cheeks. Through the whole of her slow progress from the carriage to the steps, and her toilsome ascent to the door, she was followed by the startled, bird-like eyes of the sheriff's wife. They hovered over the invalid till they seemed to fill the air with interrogation. From her they passed on to the consul, from his eyes back again to those of his wife.

What in the world did they want ? They filled with tears, she wiped them hurriedly with a shy



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glance round. At the same moment the sheriff came up to take her in. She was startled, coloured, smiled—nay, laughed. Lord knows what at.

Fru Emmy Wingaard, young and blooming, passed at the moment. The sheriff whispered something to her which made her laugh. He asked if they should not all sit together. Fru Emmy Wingaard's maiden name had been Fürst; she had curly fair hair and lively eyes; she gave several glances across to Dösen, the special friend of her brother, the naval lieutenant. Dösen made a despairing face and hung his head. She understood that he could not come in, and crossed her well-gloved fingers mockingly at him; she passed on. How pretty and merry she was; she was so like her brother Niels Fürst, the lion of this and all the neighbouring coast towns. If any one doubted that Niels Fürst was the lion of the neighbourhood, let them ask the lady who followed Fru Emmy; let them ask Kaja Gröndal, the wife of the engineer who is never at home. Ask her whether Niels Fürst, who is very often at home, is not the favourite cavalier in all the towns round, and the vigorous lady will look at you without a blush and ask again if any one doubted it? The gallant sheriff let all the ladies pass in first, saying a few friendly words to Andreas Berg, who made no reply. At the same moment Berg saw Fru Rendalen, escorted by her son, but behind them were the town bailiff and his wife; they all four came out from the pupils' entrance in the principal building—the one through the tower. So the town bailiff must have forced him-

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self in to Fru Rendalen to complain! Would Berg perhaps be put in the wrong before all these ill-behaved young people because he had strictly obeyed orders?

They came straight towards the principal entrance, instead of going to the other door, which led into the ante-room where the pupils' gymnastic dresses hung. It could be for no other reason than to obtain admittance for the town bailiff that they came this way.

Fru Rendalen and her son were saluted by those who were nearest; Berg opened the door, she mounted the steps, but then stood back and actually did let the town bailiff and his wife pass in, her son following them. She remained standing. She was a large woman now, the hair under her cap iron-grey, her face brown and stern, the eyes behind her spectacles brightening its expression. She had done some good work, and was convinced that she ought to be shown respect.

"All of you who do not belong here will be so kind as to go; we must have perfect quiet here now."

She had hardly spoken before one or two began to move; when the farthest away had disappeared round the corner, the others followed their example; there was a little tittering, a few whispered witticisms, but they went. Andreas Berg was the only one who was inclined to grumble; it had been hard about the town bailiff. "No more will come now, you can go in too, Berg; many thanks!" and it was all settled.

She went in herself, those nearest rose and

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bowed, for they were for the most part her former pupils, and this was the old custom. But when they did so the whole assemblage rose, too, by degrees.

She bowed right and left, and then took her seat by the side of the tribune which stood on the platform. She looked across at the audience. Every place was occupied; some few men were standing in the gangway; these now had chairs given to them; they were brought in by an old woman.

Tomas Rendalen was standing by the window talking to Dr. Holmsen. This gentleman was somewhat fat and florid. His large prominent eyes had a mixed expression of sarcasm and slyness; he stood there, half smiling, half embarrassed, with one hand playing with his brown, slightly grizzled beard as he listened to Rendalen.

Tomas Rendalen was his complete opposite—decided, fiery, eloquent. The school children had been eager to tell that he used scent, and truly—it wafted from him as from some fine lady. There was something precise, too, about his linen, and about the way in which his grey coat, of the most enviably new cut, fitted him. He was well-built and very elastic in all his movements. While he whispered to the doctor he had a nervous, impressive manner, as though every moment were of the greatest importance.

Suddenly he broke off and hurried across the room, for the door had opened once more, and those entered for whom apparently he had been waiting—old Green, led by Karl Vangen.

Yes, now he was *old* Green; a bowed old man

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who walked cautiously forward, led by tall Pastor Vangen. Karl's face was one of those which do not easily alter ; the large forehead, the honest eyes, the deep eye-sockets, and the wide mouth with its slight smile, which Tomas had in his time made such fun of, were all just the same as before, only on a taller body. Tomas came forward to salute the old man, and walked respectfully beside him to where an armchair had been placed for him, beside Fru Rendalen, upon the platform. Karl Vangen sat down beside him, and Tomas Rendalen mounted the tribune.

He pushed his nervous, freckled hands through his red hair, making it stand still higher up ; felt for his pocket-handkerchief, took hold of the water bottle, then moved some things off the desk ; he was a dreadfully restless fellow.

He peered through his half-closed grey eyes, now here, now there, finally at his mother and old Green, smiled at Karl and began. His voice was a tenor, full, mellow, and practised, so that it sounded pleasantly.

To the utter astonishment of the assembled company, he said that it was principally on the subject of morality that he wished to speak ; it was principally for a moral object that this hall had been built.

The whole course of education in the school would, still more than before, have morality for its aim.

In order that he might speak freely on the subject, it had been necessary to restrict the audience entirely to parents, or those who stood in their

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stead, and who might be expected, for that reason, to treat a serious matter in a serious spirit.

There was a seriousness about himself which was combined with but little acuteness: he almost threatened them. He did not in the least perceive how horrified this meeting of provincial townspeople at once became; he took their embarrassment for a kind of awe, for something of the solemn feeling of a meeting in church. He continued:

"Not alone for woman's sake must this subject be seriously approached, but for man's sake as well. All take care of themselves, men as well as women, but women had the incentive to watch over her own interests, so she stood higher as a companion and in society.

"It was in this that the school ought, better than before, to aid her.

"The venerable man who sat on his right once said to him, that only those families succumbed to drunkenness whose nerves had first been thoroughly weakened by a dissolute life. In such families the habit of drunkenness very easily becomes hereditary; I think that more than this can be traced to the same cause. Addiction to pleasure—that undoubtedly often grows in vigorous soil; but a man may appear vigorous enough and still be excessively enervated. That characterlessness which is incapable of overcoming opposition is, as a rule, the result of the forefathers' sensuality with the addition of his own; every kind of moral and intellectual looseness and dulness, when it spreads in a family which has at

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one time taken a foremost place, can, for the most part, be traced back to this cause. At all events, it is the strongest among several. Our passion, our hastiness, our impatience, our exaggeration, our irritability—unless, indeed, they can be traced to some accident in our bringing up, some purely accidental state of health—find their strongest cause here.

“All such are weaknesses contracted in the course of several generations ; perhaps increased in the later ones.

“The investigations on this subject are so recent that we cannot yet bring forward such strong proofs as we believe to exist ; it is only lately that the work of seriously minded men and women has been concentrated on this object, as the most important possible. But those who realise that this is the case are still few. Therefore schools are not by any means able to cope with the subject ; especially girls’ schools, which are absolutely bad.

“The girls’ school which we are now in is, as a place of education, as good as any in the country. I have satisfied myself on that point, but it has been the greatest regret of the principal, during the whole course of her labours, that the aim which she originally set before herself, that of giving a *larger* share to moral than to general education, has not been attained to. It is on this point that my mother has conferred with me more than on any other, so that at last it became my daily thought.

“My parentage, my education, my career have

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in more ways than one prepared this work for me."

[His voice trembled a little, and he was obliged to pause, his mother was affected: general wonderment.]

"'Woman's moral training'? most of you will object, 'is there anything amiss with it? Among the lower orders perhaps, but in the refined classes of the town is it not excellent? Protected by religion, in the pure atmosphere of home, in the regular work of school, in a guarded life passed among those of the same age and sex.' Yes, and what results from all this?"

"Let me merely in passing take the pure atmosphere of home. In a seaport town—all will admit it—the strongest current is by no means a moral one. Traders and sailors, as is unavoidable from their mode of life, are among the worst in respect to morality. No one dare deny it. An early wandering life takes the morals on to very slippery ground, and a merchant's business, where the percentage of profit fluctuates as it is honestly, or dishonestly gained, does not strengthen the moral life. His cultivation is, as a rule, very slight, his reading confined to a few newspapers, or perhaps novels; his intercourse, outside his own occupation and family, next to nothing, so that here there is little counterpoise. A sailor's life is, as a rule, one without ties, passed in every sort of country, in all parts of the world; in nine cases out of ten the master is an uncultivated man, perhaps a rough one, often tyrannised over by his 'owners,' and almost

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always tyrannical himself when opportunity offers. As things stand with us at present, when the skipper has learned to filch a percentage from the freight, as well as from everything he buys for the use of the ship, even to the very water—I know such cases!—systematic robbery, one may say—we can understand that high principles will not be cultivated in such a life. And but a rough example is given, as a rule, to the subordinates.

“The return of men such as these by no means strengthens the desire for morality in the town, or increases its stock of character. As regards the homes, those of the skippers especially, we can conceive that the children’s bringing-up must have received a strong bias; or, if every one cannot imagine it, I will lay it out before you.”

[I wish that my readers could have seen the horror, the confusion, the shamefacedness of the assembly, the rage of some, of three sunburnt skippers, for example! Others gazed uneasily into their hats, or at the backs of those before them. Some there were, however, who delighted in the scandal! They alone ventured to look up, their eyes turned eagerly towards the smiling Engel, the skippers, the tradesmen, the sheriff, and their wives—towards all, indeed, who on one account or another must sit on the stool of repentance. There were women ready to cry with shame, anger, and vexation at being there; they were prepared to fly at any moment, but dared not actually do so. There were men who thought, “If this goes half an inch further—by all the



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devils I shall be off." But they did not move. When the doctor blew his nose, they were all as startled as though it had lightened.]

"Many people firmly believe that if a child sees nothing indecent at home, and hears no doubtful stories, everything has been done which can be done, especially if they are heedful that the child himself does nothing improper. I contend that if no more than this is done, a child is exposed to every possible evil. Here people rave about the innocence of ignorance; there is something concerning that subject which I cannot now speak about—I shall take an opportunity of doing so later; I confine myself at present to saying that that innocence which knows what the danger is, and has fought against it from youth up, that innocence *alone is strong*. All education which tends to further this object must have, as an absolute condition, *full confidence between the child and its parents*—at any rate, between the child and its mother; or, to carry out the whole of my idea, between the child and that parent who is most fitted to gain its confidence; for this is, in itself, a special gift, and if neither of the parents has it, which may easily happen, then find some one who has. Use all means to accomplish this.

"If the child's father be a man who has not honourably fought the fight (it must come to him sooner or later), he is then, not only the fifth wheel in the coach, which would go all the same, but, as a rule, an actual hindrance. For there is often something in his manner, his speech, his ways which wounds or tempts; those subjects

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which should be seriously and firmly dealt with become with him almost amusing ; they are treated as things to be lightly touched upon.

"In this town, such as I know it, and indeed as you know it who have grown up in the place and become sharp-sighted in regard to it—in this town, I think, most houses are weak in this respect. The fathers give no help, the attempts of the mothers to keep up a thorough confidence as between comrades, are certainly great, but they rarely succeed, they do not understand how to do it. Till this is altered, the work at school for the cause of morality will prove deceptive, for it can easily place a child between noble teaching and evil practice ; a knowledge of evil unsupported by watchful confidence may easily itself become a temptation. St. Paul has pointed this out.

"I forewarn you for this reason : our work at first will often rise up in witness against us, but for all that there is no other course open to us—no, no other. Do we not know that there is one particular epoch of life for which, more than for any other time, it is necessary to provide and to secure means of helping ? How to do this is the question. Ask any doctor, ask any experienced teacher, if this is not the case.

"My mother, whom I am justified in calling an experienced teacher, can bear witness that at this period of change most girls deteriorate in that they lose their openness, and much of, or all their industry and sense of order ; something strange and of a mixed nature seems to enter into their composition—very different, however, with dif-

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ferent individuals. Remember, she says, "that this is the case with the majority ; there are exceptions, but this is the rule."

[Looking at the audience, you would have thought that these remarks applied only to women, and not to men. For the men looked openly and unblushingly at the women, which only made the moment more painful for the latter, especially for those who were known to all the world as having been pupils of Fru Rendalen.]

"Therefore it is precisely on this point that our work must be brought to bear, it must be completely prepared to meet this physical change, and everything must be directed to this end.

"For it is no use denying that this exists, or shutting one's eyes to it. It is the most important thing that a teacher can be concerned with. What, compared to this, which really means the preservation of body and soul, are, say, a knowledge of languages, instruction in the piano or in feminine neatness, but mere luxuries. History, geography, arithmetic, writing, are of rather more value, but even they are of secondary or even third-rate importance.

"Well, but religion, you will say, does not that often help? Ah! what do you understand by that word? Knowledge of God and of the moral laws is, of course, a most needful knowledge, but it is only when such knowledge influences the conduct that it becomes effective. *It is very rarely* that it does this. Do not build too much on a faith that may be lost. It is only a minority on whom religious belief has a lasting effect.

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We do not realise this, because with us religion is almost the only thing which holds its own—outside, that is, of our large towns. Religion appears to us to be powerful, because we have not yet acquired the habit of looking about us, and because most of us are a good deal given to deceiving ourselves.

“Children, in matters of this sort, do not really stand on a different level from adults ; do not imagine that they do so. They can, it is true, be very easily led, but they can be brought with even more ease and more completely to forget one thing and take up another. It takes very little to make them believe, but it takes still less to make them doubt, so that the ratio between belief and unbelief remains the same. Those whose religious belief forms a lasting restraint on their moral character are, among children as among adults, but few.

“There are four clergymen present. I ask them if they can rise and contradict me? I do not believe that they feel any inclination to do so.”

[ A short pause. All eyes were fixed upon such of the clergymen as they could see. The four reverend gentlemen sat as unmovable as graven images.]

“Do I hold then, you ask, that religion is of no importance in a school? Much the contrary? But there should be no class of religious instruction which does not partake of the thorough earnestness of a religious lecture. Let it as often as possible be given by the person who will have the preparation of the child for confirmation

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—that is to say, generally by the clergyman. I would say entirely by him, if that could be arranged. Thus the relation of the clergyman to the teacher would be that of a support to the latter.

"I cannot go further into this question: I will only add that this is the arrangement adopted for our school. The friend of my youth, my brother, Pastor Karl Vangen, will take the children between six and sixteen every morning for religious instruction and edification, and the intention is that he shall conduct their whole religious training until their confirmation. But it follows from what I have said that he can only hope to make the relationship of deep and lasting value *for a very few*. It is only right that this fact should be realised in schools."

"Lately," continued the speaker after another very short pause, "an attempt has been made to set up the study of history and of general literature as branches of knowledge which have an influence in the formation of character. When these studies have been more fully adapted as subjects of instruction than they have yet been, they will have more importance in this respect."

"Undoubted assistance was, of course," he went on, "always to be gained from these studies. The child learned to know of good, great, and noble thoughts, and obtained a grasp, if only a slight one, of the course of human history, as well as the history of single peoples or great men. But it can never be a matter of the *first* importance to hear about others."

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[The audience now became curious. Where would he get to at last? They felt that something important was coming.]

He leaned forward over the tribune and said slowly:

“The most important form of knowledge which a man can acquire, is the knowledge how to regulate his own life; the next, how to regulate the lives of those who come after him.”

“These words of Herbert Spencer may be taken as a rule of life for the whole world. Until this also is made the thing of most importance in schools, other subjects will not fall into their right places in the whole scheme of instruction or the arrangements subsidiary thereto. But the task of learning self-restraint, of learning to guide our offspring, this is the moral aim and the only stable ground of all instruction.

“If at an early age you obtain adequate knowledge of how your body is constructed and how it works, and if you also learn to know how you can benefit or injure it, and through yourself those who will be born to you, or who may be dependent on you, this knowledge not only becomes your greatest safeguard if you *will* use it, but as a rule it gives you a desire to do so.

“A feeling of self-respect is aroused more strongly by knowledge than in any other way, but that this may be the result, the knowledge must not be imparted too late. I need not say that ordinary schools give far too little instruction of this kind, and that little not as it should be given. The pupils must understand why it is

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given ; the teacher must be open, thorough, with no concealments, for the very things which are usually kept out of sight *are the most important*.

"I speak of that period of life to which I have before alluded. Is the child ever told what that is which is beginning ? I mean, has it full, absolute knowledge ? does it know what temptations will come, or why they will come ? Has it learned how they are to be met ? or how at that time it can create conditions for health, and through its health its character, good-humour, happiness ?—that on that time hangs its future life, nay, that of its offspring ? Is that taught in such a way as to be branded, so to say, into the child's will ? Have the subjects of which I spoke been raised to a level of one which here, and now, might guide the scholar's fancy by noble incentive, strong purpose, enthusiasm ? for children, especially young girls, can be made enthusiastic.

"Or, to come down to what every one is capable of forming a judgment about, do the parents at home know that at that age certain sorts of food, certain seasonings, are baneful to some natures ? That for some a special diet is necessary ? What sort of diet that should be ? Is it known in schools that a special course of gymnastics may be of great assistance ? Children are not all alike in respect to the amount of watchfulness and management which they require ; some few require no special attention. But that most do need it, is a fact upon which I confidently appeal to the experience of this meet-

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ing, whose members have all been young once and have had young companions."

[He made a pause and looked round the room ; a little bird could be heard twittering in the distance.]

"A further question: Is it not at that period of life that those, who had not learned to do so before, now learn to deceive? To act secretly, with a bashfulness which wounds the sense of honour and thus injures the character? If one thing can be admitted, another cannot—to the destruction of the character. Quietly, and as a rule quite unsuspected, at that age the powers of self-destruction begin to work in body and character; no one will dare to contradict me."

[The terrible pauses which he made were almost worse than anything he said; here he made one again. But he now passed on to something else.]

"But is there no place in the world," he asked, "where the schools are arranged as these experiences demand?"

[He answered this question by fully describing several schools in America and England: some for girls alone, some for girls and boys together. He also described several colleges for young women alone, and some for young men and women; he did not consider that any one of them, singly, offered all that he wished, but each one had something, many a great deal. He spoke at some length on a medical college at Boston, where an unmarried woman was professor of anatomy, and that, for students of both sexes; he mentioned that she



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further endeavoured to get her female pupils appointed as teachers in the girls' schools in the city. This lady professor was of opinion that every school should have a doctor as a teacher, and that he, or some other person, well instructed in Natural Science, should overlook the whole of the children's studies on this subject ; the lessons must always be given so as to make a deep impression.]

"Already children can learn by the aid of microscopes how plants, for example, are formed of cells, how the different parts are developed from one common origin ; they can observe how they breathe, see their division into cells, the growth of the upper parts, the fructification ; can have their imagination seized, nay, even regulated, by Nature's work and harmony. The child should early obtain a holy admiration for all that is healthy, fresh, natural, as well as compassion for all that is injured or sickly, a horror of anything unnatural, though this must be blended with compassion as well.

"Microscopes, analysis, and such a variety of diagrams and apparatus must be used, that there can be no possibility of a false impression being conveyed on any of the principal subjects, nor must the instruction become merely a wearisome lesson or a lecture over which they would go to sleep ; it must be real personal work, developing the powers under the teachers' guidance.

"Schools would naturally become much more expensive than at present ; the providing of appliances, if that were properly done, would constitute

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anespecially serious outlay." He told them what the price of a single microscope would be, and each school ought to have a large number ; beside which, the teachers must have larger salaries. " But the war estimates are paid," he said cheerfully, " a race, strong both morally and physically, would be ample compensation."

" To obtain more time, not only must the complete apparatus be used, which itself immensely facilitates the course of instruction, but other subjects must be taught on quite a different method from that at present in use, and all lessons must be done at school under the guidance of the teacher. School must therefore, of course, be held both morning and afternoon, and a dinner of sufficient and nourishing food be provided on the spot. When the child left the school it should be completely free, should have nothing on its mind for the next day.

" About all this and about arrangements as to instruction on the new plan, he would speak at the same time and place next Saturday ; he invited all the parents to attend.

" He would not conceal his belief that in no short time teaching all over the world would be arranged in the way he had indicated ; all at the cost of the State, of the Community. This was society's most important cause.

" But, uninfluenced by what might come, or what now existed, his school for the development of the powers and characters of women would follow the lines which *he* thought to be right. There is no precept so strong as example.

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"He asked earnestly for the parents' help: He hoped to make it an honour for this town to have taken the lead in this cause, but it would be an expensive enterprise. What expense would not be incurred merely for the lady doctor, who was coming over from America, to undertake the teaching which he considered as the most important for the school?"

[Movement, murmurings, excitement among the audience for the first time during the lecture.]

"Yes, in Boston I met a Norwegian lady who went over there when still very young, and who had passed her examination at the medical college several years ago. She is called Miss Cornelia Hall; this lady is already an experienced teacher in girls' schools, and has also a practice; in coming here she makes a sacrifice for her native land, but we cannot entirely accept this, we cannot allow her to relinquish a salary of three thousand dollars a year to receive the ordinary pay of a Norwegian teacher. She would not be able to practise here except under the conditions of the law with respect to Quacks, a law as unworthy of a doctor, as of the people who had made it.

"Beside this, although the collection of school apparatus is no doubt very considerable, it can hardly be too much so. The labour in teaching is lessened in exact proportion as these apparatus are augmented.

"I am not ashamed to declare that my mother, who has spent a fortune on this, is unable to go any further. I have, perhaps, already overtaxed her resources. I therefore confidently turn to all

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at this meeting, especially to the women, and say to them: If you know by experience the value of a highly cultivated woman who has learned to control herself, and rely on herself, then come to my help! Do so for your children's sake, do it for the sake of a good example! For myself, I will live and die for the cause in our native town."

He spoke these last words with a suddenly rising emotion, it came over him with such overwhelming force that he forgot about the opening of the gymnasium. He had to leave the tribune without even a bow; he disappeared through the door of the little ante-room, and from thence ran across the courtyard into the house. The audience remained seated as though he had not finished, the end came so suddenly upon them, was so startling, and his agitation had such an electrical force about it, that it touched them. They must have time to reflect. Some of ruder nature down by the door rose meanwhile, the rest following their example. And now a moment came for Fru Rendalen full of the greatest surprise.

She did not see well, not far even with her spectacles, and besides during the whole time she had looked at no one but her son. The muscles of the right side of her neck ached from sitting with her head turned in his direction; when the lecture was half over, therefore, she moved her chair and sat completely turned towards him.

The subject itself was known to her clause by

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clause, but his energetic delivery, his personal power, his boldness, were entirely new to her; they did not cause her any apprehension, but rather the contrary; she was naturally courageous, and she knew that if openness were necessary on any subject, this was the one. She knew the actual state of things and the indifference displayed. She wanted them to be made to listen *for once in their lives*. And he did it so nobly, it seemed to her. She followed and felt all his inward agitation; she knew that if he did not keep a watch on himself he would be overcome.

When, therefore, the three or four words to the meeting suddenly fired it, she was as much upset as he. Those closing words dimmed her spectacles, she was obliged to dry them, and while doing so saw nothing and thought of nothing outside herself. But she roused herself and hastily prepared to rise when the others did so; she wished to be ready to receive any who might desire to congratulate her, and perhaps send a message to her son.

And after all no one came. Ah yes, the two Frökener Jensens came, the two crooked little milliners—quiet, cordial, and smiling as they always were; they expressed their thanks and sent so many messages to the “School Director;” if they had been allowed they would have liked to have gone in to thank him themselves. But the Frökener Jensens were the only ones. Nils Hansen did not come, nor Laura; not one of her old pupils, not even Emilie Engel, poor dear Emilie of whom she had been thinking the whole

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time ; no one came. If any one had come up to Fru Rendalen, and in the name of the meeting given her a box on the ear, the worthy lady could not have been more astonished. Gracious Powers ! What did it mean ? For her his lecture expressed their mutual life, thought for thought, what they had learned and experienced, and had confirmed from each other's lives. But it was more, it was her whole work with him first and last, from his birth till now, when he stood there bright, cultivated, eager, full of one great aim ; the lecture was the expression of this work, this development in full flower, which was now about to bear fruit.

How she loved him, how she admired him ; *she* knew what he had fought through and effected, in these eight-and-twenty years. She knew what was woven into every thought to which he now gave utterance.

She had had visions of all this, but with no clearness ; it was he who had brought *that* ; she could never have expressed it clearly, but *he* did. Was it not like a fairy tale, in spite of all their work ?

The dim idea she had had at first of ousting the Kurt inheritance by her own, and that she had afterwards daringly begun when she renovated the gloomy ancestral house, and made it clean and bright, devoting herself to bringing "confiding childish laughter" into it, was now complete. She had begun it confused, stupid, but stout-hearted ; and now it was accomplished by him, the child : was it not a fairy tale ?

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How more than happy she was ! She could have knelt down before the whole assemblage to thank God—yes, joyfully with a song, though she did not possess a single true note.

She felt that if all these people came up to thank her she would not be able to control herself, but what would that matter, for he had done it all so well. And not one single person came ! Yes, by-the-by, the Frökener Jensens came, but no one else ; they were all going. But the old Dean ? Yes, he sat there still pondering ; a decided desire to speak to her might have made him rise—yes, to say something on the part of the others. It was only now, when almost every one was gone, that he began to move ; he raised his eyes, looked inquiringly at her for a few moments, got up heavily, and came towards her at last.

“ Yes, dear Frue, it was cleverly done.”

“ Yes, was it not ? ”

“ Very cleverly done indeed, but I would give a great deal that it had not been done.”

“ But, Dean ? ”

“ No, I cannot talk about it ; there is too much noise here and I am tired—another time ; remember me to him ; good-bye, Frue.” He took Karl's arm and turned to descend.

There was only one who was as moved, nay, overcome, as Fru Rendalen, and that was Karl Vangen. Like her, at the beginning, he had only been intent on the lecture and the lecturer. In his innocence he had never grasped the possibility of any one's feeling otherwise than that this was

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the right thing, spoken by the right man ; but later, chancing to notice the audience at a moment when some question was addressed to them, he began to doubt ; this doubt increased until at last he sat there with a beating heart. But that no one should come to Fru Rendalen, no, not one, even, of her former pupils ! He knew her face, he saw how she was pained. And now the Dean as well ! He let go his arm and seized her hand in both his, he would have liked to hug her ; but there were still too many people in the room. He looked at her till the tears sprang to his eyes, and so, notwithstanding, he hugged and kissed her—any one might look who liked. Then he gave his arm a little awkwardly to the Dean, and helped him down.

This made the worthy Fru Rendalen herself again ; she hurried, with a lighter step than one could have thought possible, out of the door to the little ante-room, and from there across the courtyard to the house. She looked for her son there, he had just taken off his coat and waistcoat and was going to have a bath ; but she could not wait until he had finished, she threw herself on to him, pressing him to her breast, and crying as she exclaimed : "Tomas, dear Tomas, my own Tomas !"

He also had at last realised that something was amiss, and now her look, her manner, confirmed it ; besides, she said nothing, gave him no message, although she had remained behind.

He felt, now that the strain was over, a gloomy anxiety, a stab at his heart ; but he did not wish



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to talk about it, neither did she, so she left him to take his bath.

Andreas Berg remained behind in the gymnasium, and after the last person had gone he locked the door and walked in a dignified manner to a corner near the principal entrance. The different gymnastic apparatus were piled up there and covered with a large sail. He seized hold of the sail, dragging it noisily down on to the floor. Upon this two heads came into view, four arms, which hastily twined themselves together, two skirts, and four laced boots; two fiery red faces, bathed in perspiration, were pressed close together; a tangled mass of fair hair was mixed with a dark one in the same condition. Berg stood there, looking severe.

"I see several times as the sail moved," he said; "I could not think whatever it could be; at last, thinks I, as it was two of the little girls, and it's two grown young women; aren't you ashamed o' yourselves?" One of the girls began to cry, the other laughed. "And the children of worthy men; the sheriff's daughter," he continued to the one who was laughing, "a grown girl, confirmed and in the senior class, and you there as well; do you think I don't know you? Nils Hansen's daughter; your mother was here, she should ha' seen you under the sail, and your father as well; there's a power o' difference between you and your sister Augusta; she was always pretty behaved. Take yourselves off. I'm going now to tell the mistress."

He was not out of the door before they jumped

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up. Good heavens! what did they look like? their clothes, their hair, their faces—especially their faces—exactly like a little child who has been crying and has rubbed the tears all over its face with grimy hands; their hands had been dirtied by all the implements among which they lay, and they had used them to brush away the perspiration which ran into their eyes; and how stiff and wretched they were; though they had had plenty of opportunity to prepare a comfortable place for themselves, they had remained so very long in the same position. At least an hour before the lecture began they had been under the sail, never feeling secure the whole time. One cried and scolded the other, who laughed; but when they both got a good view of each other and told one another how they looked, they burst into peals of laughter, and rushed into the little room at the other end of the building, where they knew that there was toilette apparatus. After that they were to go across to tell the boarders all about it.

For it was not for themselves alone that they had hidden under the sail for two hours; no, they had been chosen for it by the senior class; they had all come and pulled the sail over them. The girls had had some food with them, and some beer to drink as well, but they had disposed of that long before the lecture began. Over the way, in the boarders' sitting-room, the senior class was assembled. Something which only the parents were to hear about must be so very extraordinary; and those two knew all about it now.

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The two girls only allowed themselves time to wipe away the worst of the dirt, and to smooth their hair so far that they need not be ashamed to run across the courtyard. But hurry as they would, the impatience of the others stole a march upon them. The whole class tore across the courtyard to the gymnasium. They had waited to see Andreas Berg shut up and disappear ; he had taken his time over it, but at last he had gone into the kitchen. The two had been chosen on account of their good memories, and, incredible as it may seem, they remembered almost all the lecture, at all events all the portions which were most telling, the best delivered and the newest.

And if Tomas Rendalen had lectured to an ungrateful audience, here was one which was responsive enough ; young girls love courage ; when they have not to be in the front themselves they glow with admiration.

The tall, fair, slender one with the large eyes, is the sheriff's daughter—look at her ; she has her mother's birdlike face, but instead of its expression, hers was held high as if for a bold flight. It was framed by a mass of disordered fair hair which now, when her eyes, her whole face glowed, seemed to glow with them. She did not remember the different heads of the lecture in their exact order, the most important, the most interesting, came first ; from their school-life and association with Tomas, Fru Rendalen and the teachers, they were all better qualified to seize his meaning than the audience in general had been. But as Nora was in full flow she stopped, grew crimson, then

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white: Fru Rendalen stood there on the steps!

Andreas Berg had kept his word, and they had forgotten him.

When Andreas had come to her, Fru Rendalen had been so upset, that it was an absolute delight to her to find anything upon which to vent her displeasure; she marched out down the great steps; she wished to catch the girls in the very act, and therefore went the whole way round the wing and along the gymnasium, so as to come in behind them.

But just at the ante-room door, which the others had of course forgotten to shut, she heard Nora, helped out by her friend, delivering the lecture—Tomas's lecture—with Tomas's tone of voice, his delivery, his fire, with really noble eloquence. Yes, there was one who had listened! The stately Fru Rendalen would in pure self-forgetfulness have held back just for the sake of hearing and being with them, but it was not construed in that way; Nora's terror, the cry of the others, as they turned and saw this all-powerful lady, was worth remembering. Fru Rendalen was schoolmistress enough to look for this token of respect; she raised her voice and said, "I ought to be excessively angry, and that to some purpose! I see you *understand* this! But anything so marvellous as Nora's memory I have never heard."

"Never heard anything so marvellous"—it was well that it was not school time. But when Nora heard that it was not to cost her her life, and saw

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that Fru Rendalen was really pleased, she flung herself upon her neck with all the impetuosity of sixteen and burst into tears.

It pleased Fru Rendalen. "You are a wild, sweet girl," she said. "Listen, child ; when you have finished here, come over to me and we will have some regular fun."



## IV

# THE STAFF

This, thinks the intelligent reader, will be an account of a school, and I quite agree that so it ought to be. But life's logic is not always ours, and we are going to keep to that of life.

## CHAPTER I

### A GREAT LECTURE AND A LITTLE TOWN

THAT same evening Tomas knew what Dean Green thought of the lecture. Karl was the bearer of this information. Tomas went out to him when he saw him in the avenue, and they went for a long walk into the country to the left of "The Estate."

Dean Green had assumed that when Tomas proposed to explain his design for the school, it really was that design he meant, and not something quite different; he had not for a moment imagined the possibility of its being a scheme on a large scale in which the plan for the school was merely hinted at. Such a lecture, on such a subject, might be given in this country, but it must be in one of the large towns; in a small one it might be possible to do so with impunity ten years

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hence, and at all events it should be given by a man in an independent position ; but a man who wished to found a school on it . . . a more ill-judged lecture the old gentleman could not imagine. It was incumbent on Karl to tell this to Tomas, word for word, for he must have no illusions as to what would follow. If the school went on after this it would be exclusively owing to the respect which his mother had inspired. After such a challenge, it was sure to be condemned. Not by what it taught—no, but if any girl who left school during even the present year made a false step, the school would bear the blame. The Dean had gathered from the lecture that Tomas himself had feared this. Why in the world, then, had he not held his tongue? Now a single chance might destroy the school. It is impossible to describe how this took hold upon Tomas ; he felt that in repeating this Karl agreed with the Dean ; he felt that his mother would go over to them as well, that every one would. He had been guilty of egregious folly. They did not return before midnight. They could not talk to his mother that evening, everything was quiet when they entered their rooms.

Tomas had his old one, next to the bath-room, but it had all been done up for his home-coming. Karl had the one next it, the corner room ; like all those in the house, it was so long that the curtains which divided the bed from the rest of the room were hardly noticeable. Their supper was set for them, but they were cast down to such a degree that they did not touch it. After Karl had



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gone to bed, Tomas sat beside him, nor was it only on this night that he did so.

Early the next morning—it was Sunday—Fru Rendalen was down at Nils Hansen's ; she wished to act according to her usual ways. She came up again just at the time people were going to church. Karl saw her from his window, which faced the avenue, and told Tomas ; he himself was going to church. Tomas went out with him to his mother ; she looked worried.

" So not even Nils Hansen ? "

" No, Nils Hansen himself had said he did not like to be called names in church. "

" What had he meant by that ? "

" That he went to a public lecture to learn something, or to hear something pleasant, not to be abused himself, or to hear others abused. "

Fru Rendalen had answered that a lecture must point out people's faults.

" No, you must not *invite* people to hear about their faults. "

" But Fru Hansen ? "

Laura did not think his lecture wise. " Children must not know everything. "

On the contrary, the shoemaker had objected that his peasant experience taught him quite the opposite ; in the country, children knew everything from the time they were quite little, and although there was much immorality in the country, it was not for that reason, but because the whole subject was neglected there. He himself had been brought up in a thickly populated district, where both sexes went to the same school and played

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the same games until they were grown up; they knew everything, but he looked back to that time with confidence.

Nils Hansen had said this so often before that Tomas was puzzled why his mother should repeat it now. She did it merely to gain time.

The fact was that Fru Emilie Engel was ill; she had been carried straight to bed from the carriage, the doctor had been there yesterday, again during the night, and had just now come away: Fru Rendalen had met him; she began to cry.

If Emilie succumbed to this it would be her fault, she might have understood that Emilie could not bear that men's infidelity should be spoken about while her husband was beside her; so, weak and delicate as Emilie was, Fru Rendalen ought, at any cost, to have prevented Tomas from doing such a thing.

Instead, she had rejoiced over what he had done. That was because both she and others always agreed with Tomas when they were in his company, whether they would or no. For of course he had gone too far. The doctor had said so too. What had he said? "He said that it was those cursed nerves—Kurt excess—in another form." She began to cry again.

And as though Tomas wished on the spot to show her that the doctor and she were right, he flew into a violent passion. "It was really dreadful to have come home to such a miserable position, to be obliged to work among indifferent and poor-spirited people, who fled right

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and left as soon as ever a reform was brought forward."

"It was not the reform itself but the way—"

The way? A reform cannot be effected by stealth, it must show itself for what it is. Yesterday evening, when he was tired, he had felt this icy coldness as well, it made him shiver; but now it really was all too mad; if every one deserted, he would hold his ground; he certainly had thought that his mother would have been better than that; for in reality it was mostly her experiences which he had brought forward yesterday.

This passed, out in the garden, on Sunday morning. On Thursday at midday the local newspaper—the *Spectator*—was delivered to its subscribers. Under a large note of interrogation by way of heading a correspondent wished to know if it really were true that in a large school in the town the greater number of the pupils had fallen into immorality? Although it was the principal himself who had said this to several hundred people, one must still permit oneself to doubt it. That he had not been misunderstood would be proved by the following quotation: "This (namely, immorality) *was the rule*, he said; *the contrary was the exception.*"

This contribution was not signed. It fanned the smouldering feeling to an open flame. No one spoke of anything else. There was an abject terror among all the school-girls the next day; they came up to morning prayers, pupils and teachers as well, as though they were about to be punished, and Karl Vangen was so much agitated,

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that he could scarcely pray. The day's work was dull and spiritless. Rendalen did not show himself.

He responded in his own name in the next number (Thursday's). He said that if this misunderstanding were intentional, it was paltry ; if unintentional, explanation ought at least to have been sought privately. Nothing had been said that in the least resembled this ; all that was said was that the transition from childhood to maturity was so difficult a time for most that it became dangerous, and it therefore needed watchfulness.

What the principal of the school had noticed was that the characters of children of that age altered, that they lost their industry, their sense of order ; "that this was the rule, the contrary the exception." Could any one discover in this any such frightful suggestions as had been made ?

The answer was good, but it did not avail, the excitement was so great that no words could set things straight. "Why was this transition dangerous ?" they wished to know, if not for the reason he now tried to evade ?

Just below Rendalen's answer appeared in the same number another question, signed "A Mother : " "Why was it of such great importance that little children should learn how the race is propagated ?" This inquiry gave expression to a *second* side of the scandal, which filled the town. Under this question was still another address to Herr *Real-Kandidat*, School Director Rendalen ; it begged "most respectfully" to ask, if he would not allow the lecture, which he had

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delivered last Saturday at the new gymnasium of the girls' school to be printed. Those who had heard it might thus enjoy it again, and those who had not been so fortunate ought not to lose the opportunity of obtaining some information on so remarkable a subject: signed "A friend of sound and safe enlightenment."

In the next number (Saturday's) an answer from Rendalen: "Children already learned natural history, and therefore of course the terms for propagation of the species. Why they must learn this, any head-master or principal of a school could answer as well as he; this formed no part of the new side of his proposal, and only so far affected small schools as regarded the scope and method of teaching the subject." To the other question he replied, that a lecture to which only parents had had admission was evidently not fitted for general circulation.

Few found this answer satisfactory; he simply evaded the question; at least three hundred people had heard the lecture, so that it might quite properly be discussed in the press.

Three more contributions in the same number. The first expressed pleasure in the promptness of the reply; would Herr Rendalen now further explain how the sinful inclinations of young people could be checked by microscopes? This witticism was at once recognised as Dösen's. The second was signed "*Arithmeticus*," and reckoned up what it would cost the country if, in the future, every school were to have a doctor as a teacher; he calculated that a sum of one million

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kroner a year would be necessary for this item alone ; if every school were to have a chaplain as well, this would require an equal sum ; a rough estimate of the cost of the apparatus, necessitated by Rendalen's plan, would, reckoned as income, be hardly less than one hundred thousand kroner a year. Therefore the school budget of the country would be burdened with an addition of about two million one hundred thousand kroner a year. He asked if this were reasonable ?

After this came a communication addressed to Herr Tomas Kurt, otherwise Rendalen. A child of the town, it said, had fouled its own nest. If this town were worse than others, which the writer begged leave to doubt, then the ancestors of the lecturer were certainly most to blame for it, and that both in ancient and modern times, he was certainly therefore the last who ought to talk ? This contributor signed himself "*Suum cuique.*"

On the same day that these appeared Rendalen gave his second lecture, and at this, which was announced as being exclusively a technical one, twenty people, including the teachers, were present ; beside these, ten came in during the course of the lecture.

One could see that those eight days had pressed hardly upon Thomas, Fru Rendalen, and Karl. Tomas's opening to-day was another man's—tame, flat, hesitating ; his nervousness had increased twenty per cent., his handkerchief was out of his pocket and in again, the water-bottle was emptied, his hair pushed up ; he fidgeted with his

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hands, and his feet moved about as though he were blowing the bellows of an organ. But when he began to speak of the school plan, exhibiting and explaining appliances and apparatus, he caught fire and was soon his old self again, his superior power of making things plain and of awakening interest in them was recovered. A microscope with a leaf under it was passed round while he spoke ; he showed them a succession of new things, either entire collections, or large coloured pictures, or highly finished models which could be taken to pieces and studied in the most minute details ; for example, a man's chest, stomach, neck, head, some of the finer parts being on an enlarged scale. Such a collection of apparatus, he said, could never have been made in their own country. "We are indebted to the interest of the world at large that we, remote and small as we are, are able to see such a one ; and, moreover, that I should have been able to procure it." Some of it, however, he said, had been given to him.

The few who were present at the lecture were extremely pleased ; they thought the school might still do well even if he had given an unfortunate lecture.

But these favourable views were carried away by too few to create a counter-current. In Thursday's number a contributor asked the man who had signed himself "*Suum cuique*," if it meant "For every pig." If this question were on behalf of Rendalen it was absolutely the worst which had yet been advanced against him. The contri-

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butor began by saying how audacious it was that a young man, and one, moreover, who had scarcely been at home since he was grown up, should descant upon the morals of this town with a boastful superiority. Not only that, but he had spoken as though he knew every skipper in the country, as though he had followed them round the world and instituted inquiries about them ; and in order to fill up the measure of shamelessness, he had talked as though he knew the whole trading community of the world. A man with such great effrontery, and so inconsiderate a mode of expression, ought not to be a teacher in an educational institution, least of all its principal. Under these circumstances, proposals ought at once to be made for the formation of another school. It was already known that a well-meant application to the former principal to continue her work as before, without Herr Rendalen's help, had been fruitless. Well then, the writer would call upon men of position to come to the front with a view to the formation of a new school. Such a call would receive universal response. Every one in the town wondered who this contributor could be ; that very evening the suggestion was canvassed in the club, but neither then did he make himself known. All agreed to wait for Consul Engel's sake ; they did not in the least doubt that he would be on their side ; every one knew only too well what had been the result of Rendalen's lecture in Engel's home, but it would not do to talk about plans to him now. Fru Engel was dangerously ill.



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Although the deliberations lasted only a few minutes, every one agreed to this at once. When it was over it was not more than nine o'clock, so Dr. Holmsen, who had been a passive listener, went straight from the club, which was on the market-place, up the avenue to "The Estate," and repeated all to Tomas Rendalen; "the sooner he learns it the better," Holmsen considered.

"Leave this wretched hole to the devil," was his advice. Tomas took the doctor in with him to his mother and repeated to her what he had been told, adding at once that he should certainly go away.

Karl came home at that moment; it was all told to him and he agreed that it was useless to go on after what he had heard that day in the town. But Fru Rendalen would not on any account consent that they should give way; better embody the whole school plan and its grounds in a book, and appeal from the town to the country at large. There must surely be enough sensible parents in the whole of Norway to enable them to have a full school. It had not, she said, been her plan but Tomas's, and he must therefore carry it through.

She understood Tomas; it was only necessary to overcome the first painful impression and he would be himself again. They did not separate that night until twelve o'clock, and then they were all agreed in the determination to continue the plan.

It was the school work which gave Tomas

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strength for this; he was an unequalled schoolmaster and found his greatest happiness in it, and now he brought all his powers to the task. He showed the pupils the most amusing experiments that he knew, and described, explained, and lectured. He still assembled the senior class, as he had done ever since his return, one evening a week in Fru Rendalen's room, for a special meeting. He had given them some idea of the great question of the position of women, as it affected the minds of the whole civilised world; he read to them, he played to them; at this time, of course, these meetings had a special importance for him.

He never, by a single word, touched on the present strife, but in his choice of subjects for reading and conversation, nay, even of music, he involuntarily gave them an impression of his faith in a great cause, of his sufferings when his susceptible mind had received a blow.

The senior class believed unswervingly in him, and this had a great influence on the others: very soon he took over the instruction in singing for the whole school; they practised elaborate choruses and amusing plays; and this was conducive to good-fellowship as well.

But notwithstanding all this, signs of rebellion showed themselves, and that they every time disappeared again, was mostly due to Karl Vangen's morning religious instruction to the pupils and teachers. Karl was not a highly gifted genius, but he had one quality which outweighed genius, he had never said what was

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untrue; he always said a thing exactly as he felt it, nothing could alter him in this respect; and as his life had been, at one time, deeply imbued with sorrow, which had at a later time, been turned to happiness, the impression made by both remained with him, even in the tones of his voice; this was taking. He prayed so earnestly to God for peace in the school; the strife outside must never be allowed to pass the steps. "We here, all of us, wish nothing but good to each other, do we?" This was sufficient to bring some of them to tears. On one occasion he added, that he was empowered to say that any who had the least doubt about the school could leave at any time, the usual notice of withdrawal would not be enforced. They must tell this to their parents—tell them this, whether they were happy or not, *exactly as it was*.

Had the foes of the school discovered what power Karl Vangen possessed up there? For the assault was now directed against him. The *Spectator* contained a paragraph, headed "To private chaplain Karl Vangen." Every one had a regard for his character as well as for his good intentions, therefore they were surprised in the highest degree that he could countenance views such as had been expressed. "Only one with too little intelligence or too much credulity (*sic*), could fail to see that this really meant the putting of religion on one side and the substituting of natural science for it."

This elicited a perfect avalanche of letters; we will give one of them: "The writer cannot for-

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bear to express his sorrow for what he has lived to see—namely, that when an audacious voice asked from the tribune of the gymnasium at the girls' school if it were not true that only excessively few are permanently affected by a religious life, *four of the clergy had kept their seats*. Did they in their hearts assent to such a scoffing speech?

"Was not the message of Jesus given to all men? (see Mathew xxviii. 19, Mark xvi. 15, Luke xxiv. 47, Acts x. 42, 43, Colossians i. 23). To that degree it was given to all that first and foremost it was understood of the simple (see Matthew xi. 25, Luke x. 21, I Corinthians i. 19-27; Romans i. 21, 22).

"If, then, absolutely every one cannot be permanently affected by the Divine truth, what fearful deductions might not be drawn from this! Nay, could the Bible itself be a Divine truth?

"The man who asked this so presumptuously lives among teachers of the Church, nay, is one of their friends. Therefore I may venture to say that the Voice of Unbelief is gone forth into our midst (see I John ii. 19, Acts xv. 24 and xx. 30, Galatians ii. 4). Where were the four watchmen of Zion? I was on the point of rising, but I waited for them. I ask again and with sorrow, where were they? *Surely they did not sleep?* (see Matthew xxiv. 42, 43 and xxv. 5, Mark xiii. 33, Luke xxi. 36, I Corinthians xv. 33, 34, Thessalonians v. 6, Ephesians v. 14).

"If I were to put my name to this it would give no food for reflection; therefore I put the

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following holy words and numbers, 80th Psalm of David, 7th verse."

The whole town looked up the 80th Psalm and read: "Thou makest us a strife unto our neighbours, and our enemies laugh among themselves."

This quotation gave expression to the anger which all felt, that through their quarrels, the town had become the laughing-stock of their neighbours.

For the rival papers of the neighbouring towns were holding festival over this scandal. Sarcastic reports and revelations hailed down; the town had never been famous for its godliness, and as little of its morality and general virtue, but rather for wealth, extravagance, and enterprise. The most unblushing expressions of admiration for the sudden change, the astonishing moral gravity, absolutely and altogether miraculous, which had come to "The little Babylon," were constantly to be read in the newspapers of the "paltry towns."

A few days later one of these yelpers began a *feuilleton*, obviously written in the town itself. It was entitled "Kurt's Cove," and the *chronique scandaleuse* of the town was most wittily set forth in it, naturally with feigned names, but every one recognised the stories; the *feuilleton* closed with the remark that one quite understood that it remained a sacred duty for Kurt's Cove to hinder a reform of morals in the town. As this was the first thing which had appeared on the side of Rendalen's new school, every one believed (a proof of how prejudiced they had become) that if

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Rendalen had not himself written the story, he had at least helped to do so.

A notice was now issued, printed in large letters, convening a meeting of the Sailors' Association, "in consequence of the insults against our noble seafaring community, which have been flung at us from a certain quarter."

The meeting had this remarkable feature, that hardly three sailors were present. It was presided over by the owner of a wharf, who had never been to sea at all; the principal speaker was the harbour master, who had of course at one time commanded a vessel, but a very long time ago. He thundered forth tremendously. It was he who had composed the written protest which expressed "the scorn" of the sailors for all such talk.

A copy of the protest had been sent on the spot to Tomas Rendalen.

Thus far everything had been all that could be wished, but when the punch was brought out and they had taken off the first edge, they became a little too warm. It then pleased the only captain present, Kasper Johannesen, to declare that "Tomas Rendalen was—devil take me—right enough." What a wild tumult ensued! The harbour master at last moved that this new slanderer should be turned out. Kasper Johannesen would never let himself be turned out by a fellow who "*had taken percentage himself.*" He knew plenty of people who had dealt with him! The wharfinger would have put the matter aside in a dignified manner, but Kasper Johannesen

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merely told him to "go to H—l." Did they not all know that he had become rich over unseaworthy vessels, had not Lloyd's agent himself said so? Yes, that was a pretty sort of way of showing kindness to sailors, &c. &c. It ended in a fight out in the street. Ended? It did not end all that summer and autumn!

There was no more talk of the school in the town for weeks, no one spoke about anything but their business, and which of the captains were honest and which "percentage thieves;" still about business, and which of the captains were out-and-out thieves, and which only thieves in a small way. And again, who among the captains were absolutely honest. Business again, and about captain N. N., who, every one knew, could retire and set up a business for himself. When the ships came in at the end of autumn, the captains themselves took part in it. Some were dismissed, and then informed against others who were not. The mates and seamen did not wish to come forward as witnesses, but were forced to do so. The most violent hatreds were founded or were fought out on the spot; the "skippers' war" saved the school.

The town was not large enough to have two burning questions going at once, and naturally that which concerned gain was far the most important.

But if the "skippers' war" temporarily saved the school, it did not save Rendalen himself; he might expect that the first opportunity would be taken for a reckoning. He never willingly went

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into the town—at all events, not in the evening.

He received a reminder of the state of things when, shortly after "the war" had broken out, he had to go down quite early one Sunday morning, with a carriage, to the custom-house to meet Miss Hall, who was to arrive by the English boat. That day the choral society and the athletic club were starting on an expedition, a couple of hundred young men therefore had assembled there, notwithstanding the earliness of the hour. Rendalen did not feel himself safe among them; he was hardly allowed to pass in peace, angry looks and threatening hints followed him, and, as he got into the boat, the rope was cast off in such a way that it knocked off his hat and splashed him—of course entirely by accident.

They understood what he was come for, it must be to meet the new guardian of the town's virtue, the American lady-doctor. The heavy bows of the English steamer could be seen standing in—they postponed their own departure until they had seen the young lady. Rendalen had got her and her luggage into the boat; she was the only passenger. They must have a look at something so extraordinary.

After all, she looked quite a child! a little, slight, active creature, who declined all help as she came up the steps; she was down again in a moment, because the people in the boat turned one of her boxes upside down and she could not explain herself in Norse. She was quickly up again with it, then off to the carriage, into it in a



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trice—one, two, three—active and smiling; but only when she was seated did she look round with surprise at the gloomy suspicious crowd; a long inquiring look from two large eyes was cast upon them. In the meantime Rendalen gave orders about the luggage, and put something to rights with the reins, before he got up. Her woman's eyes made use of the time. They possessed a clear, cool power of observation; they did not wander over the whole crowd, but picked out several faces here and there from among the young people, quickly, certainly.

Those who received a look felt it at the bottom of their hearts, and there was not one of these two hundred young men on the quay who had any doubt but that those eyes could discover several things.

A little later in the course of the "skippers' war"—that is to say, just at the end of the holidays—the news spread round the town that lovable Emilie Engel, the friend of the poor, the friend of every one, had been given up by the doctors.

Fru Rendalen, in addition to everything else, had had increasing prickings of conscience as regarded Fru Engel, and now the news came to her as a stunning blow.

Of all her pupils since Augusta Hansen, no one had been like Emilie Engel, so pretty, so clever, and so good; she had attached herself to Fru Rendalen as to a mother, and had given her, and her alone, her confidence when she became unhappy because she loved the man who deceived her.

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All the world had known for a long time, what she had only learned in the last year or two. It was Emilie's sufferings which, more than anything else, had made Fru Rendalen glad that Tomas "took it all up," as she expressed it. And now? Neither she nor her son doubted for a moment that every one would be convinced that Tomas Rendalen had killed her by his roughness.

The bitterness would all be aroused again with increased strength.

Fru Rendalen had not obtained leave from the doctor to see Emilie; Dr. Holmsen had said in his rough way that she was too nearly related to the lecture; this remark had got about.

Emilie Engel died early one morning, and in the afternoon her spiritual counsellor, old Green, drove up to "The Estate." He brought a last greeting from her, and gave Fru Rendalen her savings-bank book; in it she had written, in large trembling characters, "For the school—yours, E."

The Dean informed Fru Rendalen that this had been done with the consent of her husband. The amount was five thousand kroner.

Fru Rendalen's agitation and happiness, her grief and thankfulness were so great, that she was obliged to leave the room and did not show herself again. Tomas came home just at the moment, and met the Dean as he was being helped by a servant down the great steps. The old man asked him to go to his mother, he knew she wanted to speak to him. Tomas was startled, but

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he controlled himself and helped the Dean into the carriage.

Fru Rendalen was in her bedroom, walking up and down, crying bitterly ; when she saw Tomas she threw herself upon his neck, while he implored her for God's sake to tell him what was the matter.

She could only look towards the book ; he saw it and took it up. He felt at once that this was salvation. What he had suffered now became evident ; he, too, burst into tears.

The next morning a message was sent round to the parents of the pupils by Fru Rendalen, asking if they might be allowed, in the name of the school, to pay a tribute to Fru Engel's memory ; if so, they must all assemble, dressed in white, at the churchyard gate on the day of the funeral and walk before the coffin, the younger ones strewing flowers, the others singing a hymn, to be followed by a chorus at the side of the grave.

All who obtained leave were to assemble at the school that day at twelve o'clock.

As only a few days intervened before the opening of the school, nearly all the pupils were in the town ; the rest returned by twos and threes, not one was absent.

It really was incredible what Tomas Rendalen accomplished in seven or eight days ; he felt that a battle was to be delivered.

The next number of the *Spectator* announced the decease, with a few words on Fru Engel's many good works, and the addition: "We

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understand that she has left a sum of money to an institution in the town." What this announcement lacked in plainness, was remedied in the paper. That day there was not a single attack on the school.

Under these circumstances Fru Engel's funeral became an exceptional event. This was shown both by the preparations which were made and the reports which circulated.

The schools asked for, and obtained a holiday ; it was decided to close all the shops, to strew the streets along which the procession was to pass with fir branches, and to have minute guns fired from a flag-ship. It was reported that the band from the nearest garrison town had been engaged and had obtained leave to be present. The principal merchants of this, and the neighbouring towns, were to take the coffin from the hearse at the churchyard gate and carry it to the grave.

Several steamers brought people, from both up and down the coast, who wished to see and hear.

When the church-bells began to toll on the day of the funeral, the streets were quite full, and there was soon no space to be had either inside or outside the churchyard ; if the crush had not been foreseen, and a number of men stationed to strengthen the police force, ladies would not have dared to venture there. As it was, the school had plenty of room, as well as the mothers and sisters of the scholars.

Nevertheless, when the minute guns began and the music was heard, still more when the procession came in sight, the crush became excessive ;

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some screams were heard, and a number of people became alarmed ; but things soon became quiet again, excepting that the excitement increased.

The band came up to the gate, stood there and continued playing before it, while the hearse drew up and the merchants came forward and raised the coffin. The numberless flowers for which no room could be found were gathered up and carried after it.

In the meantime Rendalen had worked his way out from the procession, and marshalled his white-robed flock within the gate. The coffin was carried in, but they remained quiet until the hearse had driven away and the procession was formed. The music ceased, the school children began to sing strongly and charmingly, and this change from brass instruments to girls' voices was striking.

From this solemn moment, as the funeral train moved forward, the little white-robed flower-strewers before, followed by the singers with the coffin next to them—from that moment the character of the funeral changed. Here was a festal procession, sorrow was converted into beauty, the loss into a full-handed demonstration of honour. The pageant of riches had paused before the gate of the dead. All presented themselves as an offering. Fru Emilie Engel was buried like a princess.

As the hymn ascended from the girls in front, and all the little hands began to feel in their baskets for the flowers, all eyes turned towards

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them ; all thoughts followed this white line as it wound up the slope among the crowd of black-robed women, for these streamed along with them. The war which had lately raged was remembered at once, the thought seemed to hover in the threatening atmosphere, above them and over the black train which followed. Fru Engel's pale face rose to their memories as they heard the hymn. It was poor, poor Emilie, who was being buried, the hundredfold deceived Emilie, whom all of those present, who were her elders, had known from childhood, and had seen every Sunday in church, pale and melancholy.

Was it not as though these little white-clad girls had come forward to take her from those who had come with her ? By her legacy she had given herself to these little ones. And afterwards, when the long white train streamed on to the planked floor which had been prepared, with a railing on the side next the grave, it again seemed as though they, and they alone, had a right in her.

Rendalen stepped up among them, with his hat in his hand. The little flower-strewers had had their baskets replenished, and arranged themselves before him. The coffin was lowered, there was silence ; Rendalen gave the sign, subdued music began and the chorus joined in. He conducted with a slight movement of his hand, otherwise he was perfectly still, filled with emotion and overcome by the moment. All these voices gave answer for him, they sang thanks for the new school over the grave. The women were much

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affected. Karl Vangen's anxious eye sought Fru Rendalen, he saw how much she was shaken, and worked his way towards her. But as soon as she had taken his arm she wished to cross to the side where they were singing ; she must see the grave. He led her forward. But after she had come, there was a sense that something was there which belonged to that other phase ; it was only dimly preceived perhaps, but it became quite clear when, the singing being ended, old Green was helped up beside the girls and began to speak. He repeated words which Emilie had spoken on different occasions ; collectively they formed a picture. Everything was expressed in these words, and yet nothing was actually told, every one understood without offence being given.

The one who was the most moved was Engel, for her deep devotion to him was expressed in one or two of these utterances, and against his will these words made him burst into violent sobbing which he could not restrain.

Green now ceased speaking, he concluded with some words of hers, which had followed her gift to the school. "There are two parties in this question . . . She had chosen hers," he added.

The music began again, and with it the chorus ; the old man was helped down while the little ones leant over the railing to strew their last flowers. At the same moment it thundered out in the west ; far out the sea looked black ; a rain-storm was coming, a heavy one.

Towards the town one saw how the flags

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drooped against the dark sky, all foretold violent rain ; again a crash of thunder, much louder and nearer ; the mourners began to move about, some pressed forward to look into the grave or to speak to the family. A short time afterwards, groups of white-clad girls passed down the road in strong relief against the heavy sky and the dark green trees ; some of them began to run about, and others followed their example ; some, to Fru Rendalen's horror, began to laugh and shout.

They were at dinner at "The Estate," when Fru Rendalen received two small anonymous contributions, with the motto, "There are two parties" During the afternoon they received several more, all anonymous, but none of them considerable. Still, it showed that the school had friends as well as enemies.

They had not time to dwell long on this, for that evening they were to have a little memorial feast at the school, to which Fru Engel's friends were invited, and both the senior classes. Fru Rendalen was to tell them about her companionship with the departed ; old Green had promised to come as well, and perhaps narrate something. There would be music, the chorus would be repeated, and so forth.

The whole day had been spent in preparing the place where the feast was to be held, but even so, they were hardly ready. Once more they were interrupted by a letter, this time from Dr. Holmsen ; his servant brought it up. The doctor's name was not put to it, but his handwriting was



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as well known as his servant. And who besides would have signed it,

"AN OLD FIG."

The letter ran :

"DEAR RENDALEN,

"'There are two parties.' That is certainly most true, although I consider that one of them has acted devilish stupidly, and I do not in the least feel able to join myself to it. Enclosed is a cheque for three microscopes, as you have taken it into your preposterous Kurt skull that it can be done by microscopes. I don't believe a doit in it. The power of knowledge will do no more here than the power of religion ; it will all remain just where it was. But something white, something of a song, passed through the air to-day ; that might do something perhaps. Here is the money, any way."

The senior class was already gathering in the boarders' sitting-room. The young ladies were to be in mourning as far as taste and opportunity would allow, and this was something so new and interesting that they were sure to come before their time.

The feast was to be held in the laboratory—that is to say, the Knights' Hall ; it had of course cost some trouble to prepare it for a funeral feast, but as the first ladies arrived it was finished—only Emilie's portrait was still to come.

The carriage with the two Danish horses and the man in grey livery on the box, came slowly up

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the avenue. Fru Rendalen and Tomas met it at the foot of the steps. Tomas opened the door for a young lady in deep mourning, who flung herself on to Fru Rendalen's neck ; she was Fru Engel's only daughter, she was called Emilie also. She was to remain at school a year longer.

She was an unusually pretty girl, set off as her slender figure and delicate complexion now were by her mourning. Over her hair, the hereditary Engel hair, neither red nor yellow, she had a black veil, and nothing else. She mounted the steps on Fru Rendalen's arm, crying ; Tomas followed with the portrait, which was covered with a cloth, for it was raining.

All rose as they came in, the girl herself wept still more piteously and sought a corner, where she hid her face behind her veil and pocket-handkerchief. The portrait was put up on to the chimney-piece of the laboratory, which was covered with black ; Norwegian flags were arranged on each side of it, and garlands were now hung round it.

The ceremony began with a duet, a funeral march, played by Tomas Rendalen, and the girl who had sung a short contralto solo up at the churchyard that day ; Augusta Hansen's sister, who had hidden under the sail on the day of the lecture.

After this followed some speeches, then the chorus ; all went off excellently ; there was much feeling, at times agitation. At the close there was a hymn as an introduction to a few words from Karl Vangen. He had lately read that life is

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not a closed road, but an open one ; he spoke on this.

In the meantime, simple refreshments, such as were usually served at the school parties, with the addition of dessert and wine, had been spread in Fru Rendalen's sitting-room ; for Tomas wished, in conclusion, to take the opportunity of proposing the healths of the senior classes and to thank them, and with them all those who had helped that day to celebrate a beautiful memory. All who had sung to-day at the churchyard, with the town below them, and a large number of its inhabitants before them, must have felt something which resembled a covenant with the school.

The pure memory of the dead had smiled upon it. "That covenant shall be kept," he concluded. "Shall it not ?"

"Yes, yes," came from the whole group ; they all pressed towards him with their glasses, the young eyes sparkled ; but the first was Emilie's daughter, the others made way for her ; she coloured with agitation and gratitude as she touched his glass with hers.

By ten o'clock they were alone. Tomas said to his mother as he was going to his room, "It was not so mad after all to give that lecture in the gymnasium—what do you say ?"

"Ah, do you know, Tomas, I really begin to think too that—No, no. It *was* mad. Pray do not let me be befooled again."

A maid-servant came in with a note which had been forgotten ; it had arrived during the evening.

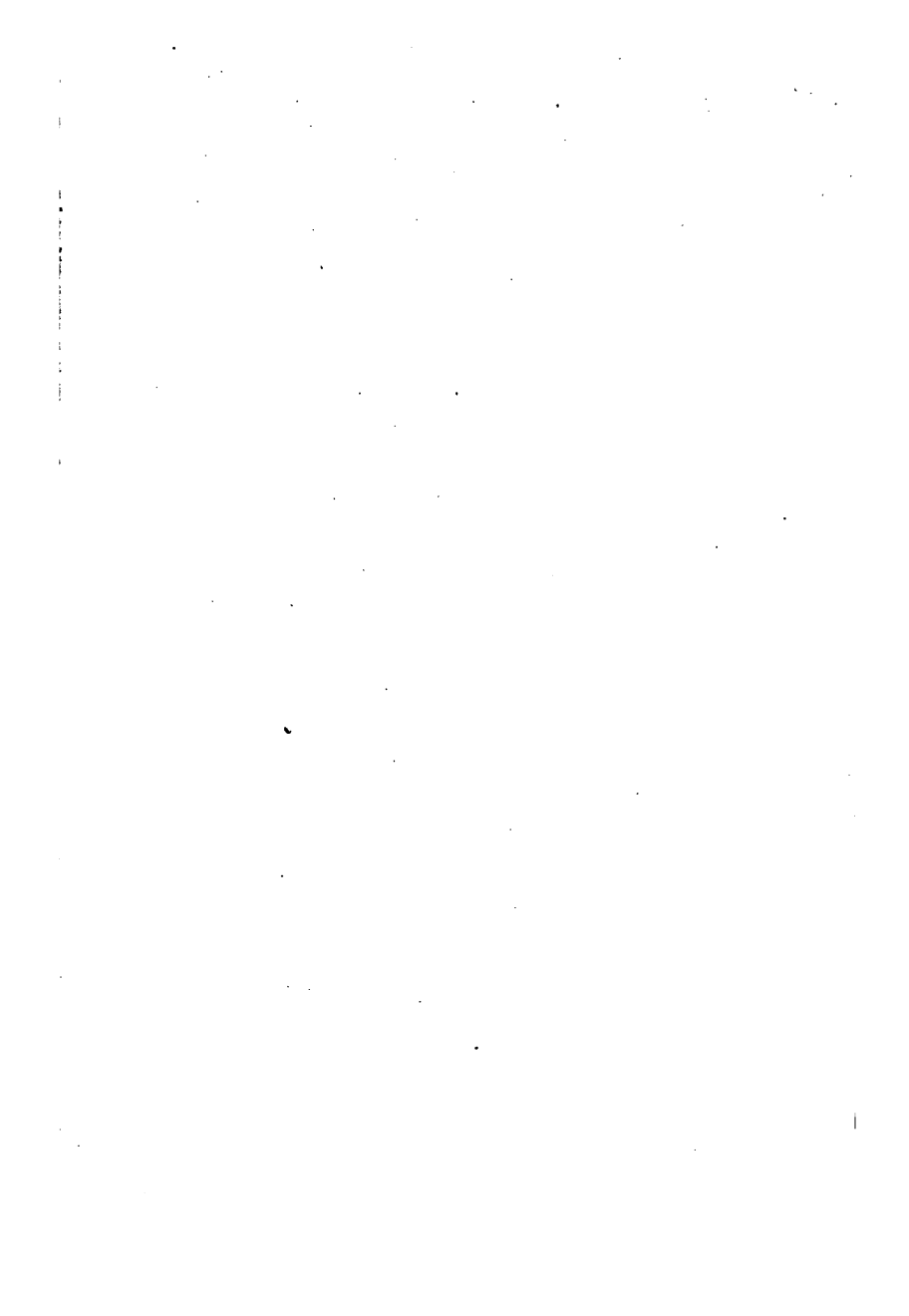
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"Do you see? do you see?" he laughed, and opened it. It ran :

"Yes, you think you have conquered, you slanderer. I saw your conceit to-day, as you stood there among all the little girls whom you had befooled into doing you a good turn. Selfishness stood out from your freckled, grey-eyed face, as well as from your Judas hair. Fie for shame ! But you will be struck when you least expect it, you beast." *Veritas.*

END OF VOL. I

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